W. THE Sheridan (3.)

RIVALS,

A

COMEDY.

As it is performed at the

THEATRE-ROYAL in Covent-Garden.

DUBLIN:

Printed for Messrs. Exshaw, Sleater, Potts, Chamberlaine, Williams, Wilson, Husband, Porter, Moncrieffe, Walker, Jenkin, Flyn, and Hillary.

M,DCC,LXXV.

PREFACE.

A Preface to a Play ſeems generally to be conſidered as a kind of Cloſet-prologue, in which—if his Piece has been ſucceſsful—the Author ſolicits that indulgence from the Reader which he had before experinced from the Audience: But as the ſcope and immediate object of a Play is to pleaſe a mixed aſſembly in *Repreſentation* (whoſe judgment in the Theatre at leaſt is deciſive) its degree of reputation is uſually as determined as public, before it can be prepared for the cooler tribunal of the Study. Thus any farther ſolicitude on the part of the Writer becomes unneceſſary at leaſt, if not an intruſion: and if the Piece has been condemned in the Performance, I fear an Addreſs to the Cloſet, like an Appeal to Poſterity, is conſtantly regarded as the procraſtination of a ſuit, from a conſciouſneſs of the weakneſs of the cauſe. From theſe conſiderations, the following Comedy would certainly have been ſubmitted to the Reader, without any further introduction than what it had in the Repreſentation, but that its ſucceſs has probably been founded on a circumſtance which the Author is informed has not before attended a theatrical trial, and which conſequently ought not to paſs unnoticed.

I need ſcarcely add, that the circumſtance alluded to, was the withdrawing of the Piece, to remove thoſe imperfections in the firſt Repreſentation which were too obvious to eſcape reprehenſion, and too numerous to admit of a haſty correction. There are few writers, I believe, who, even in the fulleſt conſciouſneſs of error, do not wiſh to palliate the faults which they acknowledge; and, however trifling the performance, to ſecond their confeſſion of its deficiencies, by whatever plea ſeems leaſt diſgraceful to their ability. In the preſent inſtance, it cannot be

ſaid to amount either to candour or modeſty in me, to acknowledge an extreme inexperience and want of judgement on matters, in which, without guidance from practice, or ſpur from ſucceſs, a young man ſhould ſcarcely boaſt of being an adept. If it be ſaid, that under ſuch diſadvantages no one ſhould attempt to write a play—I muſt beg leave to diſſent from the poſition, while the firſt point of experience that I have gained on the ſubject is, a knowledge of the candour and judgment with which an impartial Public diſtinguiſhes between the errors of inexperience and incapacity, and the indulgence which it ſhews even to a diſpoſition to remedy the defects of either.

It were unneceſſary to enter into any farther extenuation of what was thought exceptionable in this Play, but that it has been ſaid, that the managers ſhould have prevented ſome of the defects before its appearance to the Public—and in particular the uncommon length of the piece as repreſented the firſt night.—It were an ill return for the moſt liberal and gentlemanly conduct on their ſide, to ſuffer any cenſure to reſt where none was deſerved. Hurry in writing has long been exploded as an excuſe for an Author;—however, in the dramatic line, it may happen, that both an Author and a Manager may wiſh to fill a chaſm in the entertainment of the Public with a haſtineſs not altogether culpable. The ſeaſon was advanced when I firſt put the play into Mr. Harris's hands:—it was at that time at leaſt double the length of any acting comedy.—I profited by his judgment and experience in the curtailing of it—'till, I believe, his feeling for the vanity of a young Author got the better of his deſire for correctneſs, and he left many excreſcences remaining, becauſe he had aſſiſted in pruning ſo many more. Hence, though I was not uninformed that the Acts were ſtill too long, I flatter'd myſelf that, after the firſt trial, I might with ſafer judgment proceed to remove what ſhould appear to have been moſt diſſatisfactory.—Many other errors there were, which might in part have ariſen from my being by no means converſant with plays in general, either in reading or at the theatre.—Yet I own that, in one reſpect, I did

not

not regret my ignorance: for as my firſt wiſh in attempting a Play, was to avoid every appearance of plagiary, I thought I ſhould ſtand a better chance of effecting this from being in a walk which I had not frequented, and where conſequently the progreſs of invention was leſs likely to be interrupted by ſtarts of recollection: for on ſubjects on which the mind has been much informed, invention is ſlow of exerting itſelf.—Faded ideas float in the fancy like half-forgotten dreams; and the imagination in its fulleſt enjoyments becomes ſuſpicious of its offspring, and doubts whether it has created or adopted.

With regard to ſome particular paſſages which on the Firſt Night's Repreſentation ſeemed generally diſliked, I confeſs, that if I felt any emotion of ſurpriſe at the diſapprobation, it was not that they were diſapproved of, but that I had not before perceived that they deſerved it. As ſome part of the attack on the Piece was begun too early to paſs for the ſentence of *Judgment*, which is ever tardy in condemning, it has been ſuggeſted to me, that much of the diſapprobation muſt have ariſen from virulence of Malice, rather than ſeverity of Criticiſm: But as I was more apprehenſive of there being juſt grounds to excite the latter, than conſcious of having deſerved the former, I continue not to believe that probable, which I am ſure muſt have been unprovoked. However, if it was ſo, and I could even mark the quarter from whence it came, it would be ungenerous to retort; for no paſſion ſuffers more than malice from diſappointment. For my own part, I ſee no reaſon why the Author of a Play ſhould not regard a Firſt Night's Audience, as a candid and judicious friend attending, in behalf of the Publick, at his laſt Rehearſal. If he can diſpenſe with flattery, he is ſure at leaſt of ſincerity, and even though the annotation be rude, he may rely upon the juſtneſs of the comment. Conſidered in this light, that Audience, whoſe *fiat* is eſſential to the Poet's claim, whether his object be Fame or Profit, has ſurely a right to expect ſome deference to its opinion, from principles of Politeneſs at leaſt, if not from Gratitude.

As for the little puny Critics, who ſcatter their peeviſh ſtrictures in private circles, and ſcribble at every Author who has the eminence of being unconnected with them, as they are uſually ſpleen-ſwoln from a vain idea of increaſing their conſequence, there will always be found a petulance and illiberality in their remarks, which ſhould place them as far beneath the notice of a Gentleman, as their original dulneſs had ſunk them from the level of the moſt unſucceſsful Author.

It is not without pleaſure that I catch at an opportunity of juſtifying myſelf from the charge of intending any national reflection in the character of Sir *Lucius O'Trigger*. If any Gentlemen oppoſed the Piece from that idea, I thank them ſincerely for their oppoſition; and if the condemnation of this Comedy (however miſconceived the provocation,) could have added one ſpark to the decaying flame of national attachment to the country ſuppoſed to be reflected on, I ſhould have been happy in its fate; and might with truth have boaſted, that it had done more real ſervice in its failure, than the ſucceſsful morality of a thouſand ſtage-novels will ever effect.

It is uſual, I believe, to thank the Performers in a new Play, for the exertion of their ſeveral abilities. But where (as in this inſtance) their merit has been ſo ſtriking and uncontroverted, as to call for the warmeſt and trueſt applauſe from a number of judicious Audiences, the Poet's after-praiſe comes like the feeble acclamation of a child to cloſe the ſhouts of a multitude. The conduct, however, of the Principals in a Theatre cannot be ſo apparent to the Public.—I think it therefore but juſtice to declare, that from this Theatre (the only one I can ſpeak of from experience,) thoſe Writers who wiſh to try the Dramatic Line, will meet with that candour and liberal attention, which are generally allowed to be better calculated to lead genius into excellence, than either the precepts of judgment, or the guidance of experience.

THE AUTHOR.

PROLOGUE.

By the AUTHOR.

Spoken by Mr. WOODWARD and Mr. QUICK.

Enter Serjeant at Law, and Attorney.

Serj. WHAT's here!— a vile cramp hand! I cannot ſee
Without my ſpectacles. *Att.* He means his fee,
Nay, Mr. Serjeant, good Sir, try again. [*Gives Money.*
Serj. The ſcrawl improves [*more*] O come, 'tis pretty plain.
How's this! the Poet's Brief *again!* O ho!
Caſt, I ſuppoſe? *Att.* O pardon me—No—No—
We found the Court, o'erlooking ſtricter laws,
Indulgent to the *merits* of the Cauſe;
By *Judges* mild, unus'd to harſh denial,
A Rule was granted for *another trial.*
Serj. Then hark'ee, *Dibble*, did you *mend* your *Pleadings*,
Errors, no few, we've *found* in our *Proceedings.*
Att. Come, courage, Sir, we did *amend* our *Plea*,
Hence your *new Brief*, and this *refreſhing Fee.*
Some Sons of Phœbus—in the Courts we meet,
Serj. And fifty Sons of Phœbus in the Fleet!
Att. Nor pleads he worſe, who with a decent ſprig
Of Bays—adorns his legal waſte of wig.
Serj. Full-bottom'd Heroes thus, on ſigns, unfurl
A leaf of laurel—in a grove of curl!
Yet tell your Client, that, in adverſe days,
This Wig is warmer than a buſh of Bays.
Att. Do you then, Sir, my Client's place ſupply,
Profuſe of robe, and prodigal of tye——
Do you, with all thoſe bluſhing pow'rs of face,
And wonted baſhful heſitating grace,
Riſe in the Court, and flouriſh on the Caſe.

[*Exit.*

PROLOGUE.

Serj. For practice then ſuppoſe—this Brief will
ſhew it,——
Me, Serjeant *Woodward*, —Council for the Poet.
Us'd to the ground—I know 'tis hard to deal
With this dread *Court*, from whence there's *no appeal*;
No *Tricking* here, to blunt the edge of *Law*,
Or, damn'd in *Equity*—eſcape by *Flaw*;
But *Judgment* given—*your Sentence* muſt remain;
—No *Writ of Error* lies—to *Drury-lane!*
Yet when ſo kind you ſeem—'tis paſt diſpute
We gain ſome favour, if not *Coſts of Suit.*
No ſpleen is here! I ſee no hoarded fury;
—I think I never fac'd a milder Jury!
Sad elſe our plight!—where frowns are tranſportation,
A hiſs the gallows,—and a groan, damnation!
But ſuch the public candour, without fear
My Client waves all *right of challenge* here.
No Newſman from *our* Seſſion is diſmiſs'd,
Nor Wit nor Critic *we* ſcratch off the liſt;
His faults can never hurt another's eaſe,
His crime at worſt—a *bad attempt* to pleaſe:
Thus, all reſpecting, he appeals to all,
And by the general voice will *ſtand* or *fall.*

EPILOGUE.

By the AUTHOR.

Spoken by Mrs. BULKLEY.

LADIES for *You*—I heard our Poet ſay—
He'd try to coax ſome *Moral* from his Play:
'One moral's plain—cried I—without more fuſs;
'Man's ſocial happineſs all reſts on Us—
'Thro' all the Drama—whether d—n'd or not—
'*Love* gilds the *Scene*, and *Women* guide the *plot.*
'From

'From ev'ry rank—obedience is our due—
'D'ye doubt?—The world's great ſtage ſhall prove it true.'

The Cit—well ſkill'd to ſhun domeſtic ſtrife—
Will ſup abroad;—but firſt—he'll aſk his *wife*.
John Trot, his friend—for once, will do the ſame,
But then—he'll juſt *ſtep home to tell my dame*.—

The *ſurly 'Squire*—at noon reſolves to rule,
And half the day—zounds! Madam is a fool!
Convinc'd at night—the vanquiſh'd Victor ſays,
Ah! Kate! *you women have ſuch coaxing ways!* ——

The *jolly Toper* chides each tardy blade,—
Till reeling Bacchus calls on Love for aid:
Then with each Toaſt, he ſees fair bumpers ſwim,
And kiſſes Chloe on the ſparkling Brim!

Nay, I have heard that Stateſmen—great and wiſe—
Will *ſometimes* counſel with a Lady's eyes;
The ſervile ſuitors—watch her various face,
She ſmiles preferment—or ſhe frowns diſgrace,
Curtſies a penſion here—there nods a place.

Nor with leſs awe, in ſcenes of humbler life,
Is *view'd* the *miſtreſs*, or is *heard* the *wife*.
The pooreſt Peaſant of the pooreſt ſoil,
The child of Poverty, and heir to Toil—
Early from radiant Love's impartial light,
Steals one ſmall ſpark, to chear his world of Night:
Dear ſpark!—that oft thro' winter's chilling woes,
Is all the warmth his little cottage knows!

The wand'ring *Tar*—who, not for *years*, has preſs'd
The widow'd Partner of his *day* of reſt—
On the cold deck—far from her arms remov'd—
Still hums the ditty which his Suſan lov'd:
And while around the cadence rude is blown,
The Boatſwain whiſtles in a ſofter tone.

The *Soldier*, fairly proud of wounds and toil,
Pants for the *triumph* of his Nancy's ſmile;
But ere the battle ſhould he liſt' her cries,
The Lover trembles—and the Hero dies!
That heart, by war and honour ſteel'd to fear,
Droops on a ſigh, and ſickens at a tear!

But Ye more cautious—ye nice judging few,
Who give to Beauty only Beauty's due,

EPILOGUE.

Tho' friends to Love—*Ye* view with deep regret
Our Conqueſts marr'd—our triumphs incomplete,
Till poliſh'd Wit more laſting charms diſcloſe,
And Judgment fix the darts which Beauty throws!
——In female breaſts did Senſe and Merit rule,
The Lover's mind would aſk no other ſchool;
Sham'd into ſenſe---the Scholars of our eyes,
Our Beaux from *Gallantry* would ſoon be wiſe;
Would gladly light, their homage to improve,
The Lamp of Knowledge at the Torch of Love!

Dramatis Perſonæ.

MEN.

Sir Anthony Abſolute,	Mr. SHUTER.
Capt. Abſolute,	Mr. WOODWARD.
Faulkland,	Mr. LEWES.
Acres,	Mr. QUICK.
Sir Lucius O'Trigger,	Mr. CLINCH.
Fag,	Mr. LEE-LEWIS.
David,	Mr. DUNSTAL.
Coachman,	Mr. FEARON.

WOMEN.

Mrs. Malaprop,	Mrs. GREEN.
Lydia Languiſh,	Miſs. BARSANTI.
Julia,	Mrs. BULKLEY.
Lucy,	Mrs. LESSINGHAM.

Maid, Boy, Servants, &c.

SCENE, *Bath.*

TIME of ACTION, Five Hours.

THE

RIVALS.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A* Street *in* Bath.

Coachman *croſſes the ſtage.*——*Enter* Fag, *looking after him.*

Fag. WHAT!—Thomas!—Sure 'tis he?—What!—Thomas!—Thomas!

Coach. Hay!—Odd's life—Mr. Fag!—give us your hand, my old fellow-ſervant.

Fag. Excuſe my glove, Thomas:—I'm dev'liſh glad to ſee you, my lad; why, my prince of charioteers, you look as hearty!—but who the deuce thought of ſeeing you in Bath!

Coach. Sure, Maſter, Madam Julia, Harry, Mrs. Kate, and the poſtillion be all come!

Fag. Indeed!

Coach. Aye! Maſter thought another fit of the gout was coming to make him a viſit:—ſo he'd a mind to gi't the ſlip, and whip we were all off at an hour's warning.

Fag. Aye, aye! haſty in every thing, or it would not be Sir Anthony Abſolute!

Coach. But tell us, Mr. Fag, how does young Maſter? Odd! Sir Anthony will ſtare to ſee the Captain here!

Fag. I do not ſerve Capt. Abſolute now.—

Coach. Why ſure!

Fag. At preſent I am employ'd by Enſign Beverley.

Coach.

Coach. I doubt, Mr. Fag, you ha'n't changed for the better.

Fag. I have not changed, Thomas.

Coach. No! why didn't you ſay you had left young Maſter?

Fag. No—Well, honeſt Thomas, I muſt puzzle you no farther:—briefly then—Capt. Abſolute and Enſign Beverley are one and the ſame perſon.

Coach. The devil they are!

Fag. So it is indeed, Thomas; and the *Enſign* half of my maſter being on guard at preſent—the *Captain* has nothing to do with me.

Coach. So, ſo!--what, this is ſome freak, I warrant! — Do, tell us, Mr. Fag, the meaning o't — you know I ha' truſted you.

Fag. You'll be ſecret, Thomas.

Coach. As a coach-horſe.

Fag. Why then the cauſe of all this is — LOVE, — LOVE, Thomas, who (as you may get read to you) has been a maſquerader ever ſince the days of Jupiter.

Coach. Aye, aye;—I gueſſed there was a lady in the caſe:—but pray, why does your Maſter paſs only for *Enſign?*—now if he had ſhamm'd *General* indeed——

Fag. Ah! Thomas, there lies the myſtery o'the matter. — Hark'ee, Thomas, my Maſter is in love with a lady of a very ſingular taſte: a lady who likes him better as a *half-pay Enſign* than if ſhe knew he was ſon and heir to Sir Anthony Abſolute, a baronet with three thouſand a-year!

Coach. That is an odd taſte indeed! — but has ſhe got the ſtuff, Mr. Fag; is ſhe rich, hey?

Fag. Rich!--why I believe ſhe owns half the ſtocks!--Z—ds! Thomas, ſhe could pay the national debt as eaſy as I could my waſherwoman! — She has a lap-dog that eats out of gold,---ſhe feeds her parrot with ſmall pearls — and all her thread-papers are made of bank-notes!

Coach. Bravo! — faith! —— Odd! I warrant ſhe has a ſet of thouſands at leaſt: — but does ſhe draw kindly with the Captain?

Fag. As fond as pigeons.

Coach. May one hear her name?

Fag. Miſs Lydia Languiſh — But there is an old tough

tough aunt in the way: — though by the bye — ſhe has never ſeen my Maſter — for he got acquainted with Miſs while on a viſit in Glouceſterſhire.

Coach. Well — I wiſh they were once harneſs'd together in matrimony. — But pray, Mr. Fag, what kind of a place is this Bath? — I ha' heard a deal of it — here's a mort o' merry-making — hey?

Fag. Pretty well, Thomas, pretty well — 'tis a good lounge. Though at preſent we are, like other great aſſemblies, divided into parties — High-roomians and Low-roomians; however, for my part, I have reſolved to ſtand neuter; and ſo I told Bob Bruſh at our laſt committee.

Coach. But what do the folks do here?

Fag. Oh! there are little amuſements enough — in the morning we go to the pump-room (though neither my Maſter nor I drink the waters); after breakfaſt we ſaunter on the parades or play a game at billiards; at night we dance: but d — n the place, I'm tired of it: their regular hours ſtupify me — not a fiddle nor a card after eleven! — however, Mr. Faulkland's gentleman and I keep it up a little in private parties; — I'll introduce you there, Thomas — you'll like him much.

Coach. Sure I know Mr. Du-Peigne — you know his Maſter is to marry Madam Julia.

Fag. I had forgot.--- But Thomas, you muſt poliſh a little --- indeed you muſt: --- here now this wig! --- what the devil do you do with a *wig*, Thomas? --- none of the London whips of any degree of Ton wear *wigs* now.

Coach. More's the pity! mores the pity, I ſay --- Odd's life! when I heard how the lawyers and doctors had took to their own hair, I thought how 'twould go next: --- Odd rabbit it! when the faſhion had got foot on the Bar, I gueſs'd 'twould mount to the Box! ---but 'tis all out of character, believe me Mr. Fag: and look'ee, I'll never gi' up mine—the lawyers and doctors may do as they will.

Fag. Well, Thomas, we'll not quarrel about that.

Coach. Why, bleſs you, the gentlemen of the profeſſions ben't all of a mind—for in our village now tho'ff *Jack Guage* the *exciſeman*, has ta'en to his carrots,

rots, there's little Dick the farrier ſwears he'll never forſake his *bob*, tho' all the college ſhould appear with their own heads!

Fag. Indeed! well ſaid Dick! but hold—mark! mark! Thomas.

Coach. Zooks! 'tis the Captain — Is that the lady with him?

Fag. No! no! that is Madam Lucy—my Maſter's miſtreſs's maid.—They lodge at that houſe—but I muſt after him to tell him the news.

Coach. Odd! he's giving her money! — well Mr. Fag——

Fag. Good bye, Thomas. — I have an appointment in Gydes' Porch this evening at eight; meet me there, and we'll make a little party. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE II. *A Dreſſing-room in Mrs.* Malaprop's *lodging.*

Lydia *ſitting on a ſopha with a book in her hand.*— Lucy, *as juſt returned from a meſſage.*

Lucy. Indeed, Ma'am, I transferr'd half the town in ſearch of it:—I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I ha'n't been at.

Lyd. And could not you get '*The Reward of Conſtancy?*'

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor '*The Fatal Connection?*'

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am.

Lyd. Nor '*The Miſtakes of the Heart?*'

Lucy. Ma'am as ill-luck would have it, Mr. Bull ſaid Miſs Sukey Saunter had juſt fetch'd it away.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Did you inquire for '*The Delicate Diſtreſs?*'——

Lucy. — Or '*The Memoirs of Lady Woodford?*' Yes indeed, Ma'am—I aſk'd every where for it; and I might have brought it from Mr. Frederick's, but Lady Slattern Lounger, who had juſt ſent it home, had ſo ſoiled and dog's-ear'd it, it wa'nt fit for a chriſtian to read.

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—Yes, I always know when Lady Slattern has been before me.—She has a moſt obſerving thumb: and I believe cheriſhes her nails for the convenience of making marginal notes.—Well, child, what *have* you brought me?

Lucy.

Lucy. Oh!—here Ma'am.

[*Taking books from under her cloak, and from her pockets.*]

This is '*The Gordian Knot*,'—and this '*Peregrine Pickle.*' Here are '*The Tears of Senſibility*' and '*Humphry Clinker.*' This is '*The Memoirs of a Lady of Quality, written by herſelf*,'—and here the ſecond volume of '*The Sentimental Journey.*'

Lyd. Heigh-ho!—What are thoſe books by the glaſs?

Lucy. The great one is only '*The whole Duty of Man*'—where I preſs a few blonds, Ma'am.

Lyd. Very well—give me the *ſal volatile.*

Lucy. Is it in a blue cover, Ma'am?

Lyd. My ſmelling bottle, you ſimpleton!

Lucy. O, the drops! here Ma'am.

Lyd. No note, Lucy?

Lucy. No indeed, Ma'am—but I have ſeen a certain perſon———

Lyd. What, my Beverley!—well Lucy?

Lucy. O Ma'am! he looks ſo deſponding and melancholic!

Lyd. Hold Lucy!—here's ſome one coming—quick, ſee who it is.——— [*Exit* Lucy.]

Surely I heard my couſin Julia's voice! [*Re-enter* Lucy.]

Lucy. Lud! Ma'am, here is Miſs Menville.

Lyd. Is it poſſible!———

Enter Julia.

Lyd. My deareſt Julia, how delighted am I!—(*Embrace*) How unexpected was this happineſs!

Jul. True, Lydia—and our pleaſure is the greater;—but what has been the matter?—you were denied to me at firſt!

Lyd. Ah! Julia, I have a thouſand things to tell you!—but firſt inform me, what has conjur'd you to Bath?—Is Sir Anthony here?

Jul. He is—we are arrived within this hour—and I ſuppoſe he will be here to wait on Mrs. Malaprop as ſoon as he is dreſs'd.

Lyd. Then before we are interrupted, let me impart to you ſome of my diſtreſs!—I know your gentle nature will ſympathize with me, tho' your prudence may condemn me!—My letters have inform'd you of my whole

whole connexion with Beverley;—but I have loſt him, Julia!—my aunt has diſcover'd our intercourſe by a note ſhe intercepted, and has confin'd me ever ſince!—Yet, would you believe it? ſhe has fallen abſolutely in love with a tall Iriſh baronet ſhe met one night ſince we have been here, at Lady Macſhuffle's rout.

Jul. You jeſt, Lydia!

Lyd. No, upon my word.—She abſolutely carries on a kind of correſpondence with him, under a feigned name though, till ſhe chuſes to be known to him;—but it is a *Delia* or a *Celia*, I aſſure you.

Jul. Then, ſurely, ſhe is now more indulgent to her niece.

Lyd. Quite the contrary. Since ſhe has diſcovered her own frailty, ſhe is become more ſuſpicious of mine. Then I muſt inform you of another plague!—That odious Acres is to be in Bath to-day; ſo that I proteſt I ſhall be teaſed out of all ſpirits!

Jul. Come, come, Lydia, hope the beſt.—Sir Anthony ſhall uſe his intereſt with Mrs. Malaprop.

Lyd. But you have not heard the worſt. Unfortunately I had quarrell'd with my poor Beverley, juſt before my aunt made the diſcovery, and I have not ſeen him ſince, to make it up.

Jul. What was his offence?

Lyd. Nothing at all!—But, I don't know how it was, as often as we had been together, we had never had a quarrel!---And, ſomehow I was afraid he would never give me an opportunity.---So, laſt Thurſday, I wrote a letter to myſelf, to inform myſelf that Beverley was at that time paying his addreſſes to another woman.---I ſign'd it *your Friend unknown*, ſhew'd it to Beverley, charg'd him with his falſehood, put myſelf in a violent paſſion, and vow'd I'd never ſee him more.

Jul. And you let him depart ſo, and have not ſeen him ſince?

Lyd. 'Twas the next day my aunt found the matter out. I intended only to have teaſed him three days and a half, and now I've loſt him for ever.

Jul. If he is as deſerving and ſincere as you have repreſented him to me, he will never give you up ſo. Yet conſider Lydia, you tell me he is but an enſign, and you have thirty thouſand pounds!

Lyd.

Lyd. But you know I loſe moſt of my fortune, if I marry without my aunt's conſent, till of age; and that is what I have determined to do ever ſince I knew the penalty.— Nor could I love the man, who would wiſh to wait a day for the alternative.

Jul. Nay, this is caprice!

Lyd. What, does Julia tax me with caprice?--- I thought her lover Faulkland had enured her to it.

Jul. I do not love even *his* faults.

Lyd. But a-propos---you have ſent to him, I ſuppoſe?

Jul. Not yet, upon my word---nor has he the leaſt idea of my being in Bath.---Sir Anthony's reſolution was ſo ſudden, I could not inform him of it.

Lyd. Well, Julia, you are your own miſtreſs, (though under the protection of Sir Anthony) yet have you, for this long year, been the ſlave to the caprice, the whim, the jealouſy of this ungrateful Faulkland, who will ever delay aſſuming the right of a huſband, while you ſuffer him to be equally imperious as a lover.

Jul. Nay, you are wrong entirely.---We were contracted before my Father's death.---*That*, and ſome conſequent embarraſſments, have delay'd what I know to be my Faulkland's moſt ardent wiſh.---He is too generous to trifle on ſuch a point.---And for his character, you wrong him there too.---No, Lydia, he is too proud, too noble to be jealous; if he is captious, 'tis without diſſembling; if fretful, without rudeneſs.---Unus'd to the foppery of love, he is negligent of the little duties expected from a lover---but being unhackney'd in the paſſion, his love is ardent and ſincere; and as it engroſſes his whole ſoul, he expects every thought and emotion of his miſtreſs to move in uniſon with his.---Yet, though his pride calls for this full return---his humility makes him undervalue thoſe qualities in him, which ſhould entitle him to it; and not feeling why he ſhould be lov'd to the degree he wiſhes, he ſtill ſuſpects that he is not lov'd enough:---This temper, I muſt own, has coſt me many unhappy hours; but I have learn'd to think myſelf his debtor, for thoſe imperfections which ariſe from the ardour of his love.

Lyd.

Lyd. Well, I cannot blame you for defending him.--But tell me candidly, Julia, had he never ſav'd your life, do you think you ſhou'd have been attach'd to him as you are?---Believe me, the rude blaſt that overſet your boat was a proſperous gale of love to him.

Jul. Gratitude may have ſtrengthened my attachment to Mr. Faulkland, but I lov'd him before he had preſerv'd me; yet ſurely that alone were an obligation ſufficient.

Lyd. Obligation!—Why a water-ſpaniel would have done as much ---Well, I ſhould never think of giving my heart to a man becauſe he could ſwim!

Jul. Come, Lydia, you are too inconſiderate.

Lyd. Nay, I do but jeſt.---What's here?

Enter Lucy *in a hurry.*

Lucy. O Ma'am, here is Sir Anthony Abſolute juſt come home with your aunt.

Lyd. They'll not come here.---Lucy do you watch. [*Exit* Lucy.

Jul. Yet I muſt go---Sir Anthony does not know I am here, and if we meet, he'll detain me, to ſhew me the town.---I'll take another opportunity of paying my reſpects to Mrs. Malaprop, when ſhe ſhall treat me, as long as ſhe chooſes, with her ſelect words ſo ingeniouſly *miſapplied* without being *miſpronounced.*

Re-enter Lucy.

Lucy. O Lud! Ma'am, they are both coming up ſtairs.

Lyd. Well, I'll not detain you, Coz.---Adieu, my dear Julia, I'm ſure you are in haſte to ſend to Faulkland.---There---through my room you'll find another ſtair-caſe.

Jul. Adieu.---*(Embrace.)* [*Exit* Julia.

Lyd. Here, my dear Lucy, hide theſe books.---Quick, quick.---Fling *Peregrine Pickle* under the toilet --throw *Roderick Random* into the cloſet--put *The Innocent Adultery* into *The Whole Duty of Man*---thruſt *Lord Aimworth* under the ſopha---cram *Ovid* behind the bolſter---there---put *the Man of Feeling* into your pocket---ſo, ſo, now lay *Mrs Chapone* in ſight, and leave *Fordyce's Sermons* open on the table.

Lucy.

Lucy. O burn it, Ma'am, the hair-dreſſer has torn away as far as *Proper Pride.*

Lyd. Never mind — open at *Sobriety.* — Fling me *Lord Cheſterfield's Letters.* —— Now for 'em.

Enter Mrs. Malaprop *and Sir* Anthony Abſolute.

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir Anthony, there ſits the deliberate Simpleton, who wants to diſgrace her family, and laviſh herſelf on a fellow not worth a ſhilling!

Lyd. Madam, I thought you once ———

Mrs. Mal. You thought, Miſs! --- I don't know any buſineſs you have to think at all --- thought does not become a young woman; the point we would requeſt of you is, that you will promiſe to forget this fellow --- to illiterate him, I ſay, quite from your memory.

Lyd. Ah! Madam! our memories are independent of our wills. — It is not ſo eaſy to forget.

Mrs. Mal. But I ſay it is, Miſs; there is nothing on earth ſo eaſy as to *forget*, if a perſon chooſes to ſet about it. — I'm ſure I have as much forgot your poor dear uncle as if he had never exiſted — and I thought it my duty ſo to do; and let me tell you, Lydia, theſe violent memories don't become a young woman.

Sir Anth. Why ſure ſhe won't pretend to remember what ſhe's order'd not! — aye, this comes of her reading!

Lyd. What crime, Madam, have I committed to be treated thus?

Mrs. Mal. Now don't attempt to extirpate yourſelf from the matter; you know I have proof controvertible of it. — But tell me, will you promiſe to do as you're bid? — Will you take a huſband of your friends chooſing?

Lyd. Madam, I muſt tell you plainly, that had I no preference for any one elſe, the choice you have made would be my averſion.

Mrs. Mal. What buſineſs have you, Miſs, with *preference* and *averſion?* They don't become a young woman; and you ought to know, that as both always wear off, 'tis ſafeſt in matrimony to begin with a little *averſion.* I am ſure I hated your poor dear uncle before marriage as if he'd been a black-a-moor — and yet,

yet, Miſs, you are ſenſible what a wife I made! —— and when it pleas'd Heav'n to releaſe me from him, 'tis unknown what tears I ſhed!—But ſuppoſe we were going to give you another choice, will you promiſe us to give up this Beverley?

Lyd. Could I belie my thoughts ſo far, as to give that promiſe, my actions would certainly as far belie my words.

Mrs. Mal. Take yourſelf to your room. — You are fit company for nothing but your own ill-humours.

Lyd. Willingly, Ma'am — I cannot change for the worſe. [*Exit* Lydia.

Mrs. Mal. There's a little intricate huſſy for you!

Sir Anth. It is not to be wonder'd at, Ma'am —— all this is the natural conſequence of teaching girls to read. — Had I a thouſand daughters, by Heavens! I'd as ſoon have them taught the black-art as their alphabet!

Mrs. Mal. Nay, nay, Sir Anthony, you are an abſolute miſanthropy.

Sir Anth. In my way hither, Mrs. Malaprop, I obſerved your niece's maid coming forth from a circulating library! — She had a book in each hand — they were half-bound volumes, with marbled covers! — From that moment I gueſs'd how full of duty I ſhould ſee her miſtreſs!

Mrs. Mal. Thoſe are vile places, indeed!

Sir Anth. Madam, a circulating library in a town is, as an ever-green tree, of diabolical knowledge! — It bloſſoms through the year! — And depend on it, Mrs. Malaprop, that they who are ſo fond of handling the leaves, will long for the fruit at laſt.

Mrs. Mal. Well, but Sir Anthony, your wife, Lady Abſolute, was fond of books.

Sir Anth. Aye — and injury ſufficient they were to her, Madam. — But were I to chuſe another helpmate, the extent of her erudition ſhould conſiſt in her knowing her ſimple letters, without their miſchievous combinations; — and the ſummit of her ſcience be — her ability to count as far as twenty. — The firſt, Mrs. Malaprop, would enable her to work *A. A.* upon my linen;

linen; — and the latter would be quite ſufficient to prevent her giving me a ſhirt, No. 1. and a ſtock, No. 2.

Mrs. Mal. Fie, fie, Sir Anthony, you ſurely ſpeak laconically!

Sir Anth. Why, Mrs. Malaprop, in moderation, now, what would you have a woman know?

Mrs. Mal. Obſerve me, Sir Anthony. — I would by no means wiſh a daughter of mine to be a progeny of learning; I don't think ſo much learning becomes a young woman; for inſtance — I would never let her meddle with Greek, or Hebrew, or Algebra, or Simony, or Fluxions, or Paradoxes, or ſuch inflammatory branches of learning — neither would it be neceſſary for her to handle any of your mathematical, aſtronomical, diabolical inſtruments; — But, Sir Anthony, I would ſend her, at nine years old, to a boarding-ſchool, in order to learn a little ingenuity and artifice. ——— Then, Sir, ſhe ſhould have a ſupercilious knowledge in accounts; — and as ſhe grew up, I would have her inſtructed in geometry, that ſhe might know ſomething of the contagious countries; — but above all, Sir Anthony, ſhe ſhould be miſtreſs of orthodoxy, that ſhe might not miſ-ſpell, and miſpronounce words ſo ſhamefully as girls uſually do; and likewiſe that ſhe might reprehend the true meaning of what ſhe is ſaying. ——— This, Sir Anthony, is what I would have a woman know; — and I don't think there is a ſuperſtitious article in it.

Sir Anth. Well, well, Mrs. Malaprop, I will diſpute the point no further with you; though I muſt confeſs, that you are a truly moderate and polite arguer, for almoſt every third word you ſay is on my ſide of the queſtion. — But, Mrs. Malaprop, to the more important point in debate, — you ſay, you have no objection to my propoſal.

Mrs. Mal. None, I aſſure you. — I am under no poſitive engagement with Mr. Acres, and as Lydia is ſo obſtinate againſt him, perhaps your ſon may have better ſucceſs.

Sir Anth. Well, Madam, I will write for the boy directly. — He knows not a ſyllable of this yet, though I have

I have for ſome time had the propoſal in my head. He is at preſent with his regiment.

Mrs. Mal. We have never ſeen your ſon, Sir Anthony; but I hope no objection on his ſide.

Sir Anth. Objection! — let him object if he dare! — No, no, Mrs. Malaprop, Jack knows that the leaſt demur puts me in a frenzy directly. — My proceſs was always very ſimple — in their younger days, 'twas 'Jack, do this;' —— if he demur'd --- I knock'd him down --- and if he grumbled at that --- I always ſent him out of the room.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, and the propereſt way, o' my conſcience! --- nothing is ſo conciliating to young people as ſeverity. --- Well, Sir Anthony, I ſhall give Mr. Acres his diſcharge, and prepare Lydia to receive your ſon's invocations; --- and I hope you will repreſent *her* to the Captain as an object not altogether illegible.

Sir Anth. Madam, I will handle the ſubject prudently. --- Well, I muſt leave you --- and let me beg you, Mrs. Malaprop, to enforce this matter roundly to the girl; --- take my advice --- keep a tight hand —— if ſhe rejects this propoſal --- clap her under lock and key: --- and if you were juſt to let the ſervants forget to bring her dinner for three or four days, you can't conceive how ſhe'd come about! [*Exit Sir* Anth.

Mrs. Mal. Well, at any rate I ſhall be glad to get her from under my intuition. --- She has ſome-how diſcovered my partiality for Sir Lucius O'Trigger --- ſure, Lucy can't have betray'd me! --- No, the girl is ſuch a ſimpleton, I ſhould have made her confeſs it. --- Lucy! --- Lucy! --- *(calls)* Had ſhe been one of your artificial ones, I ſhould never have truſted her.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. Did you call, Ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Yes, girl. --- Did you ſee Sir Lucius while you was out?

Lucy. No, indeed, Ma'am, not a glimpſe of him.

Mrs. Mal. You are ſure, Lucy, that you never mention'd ——

Lucy. O Gemini! I'd ſooner cut my tongue out.

Mrs. Mal. Well, don't let your ſimplicity be impos'd on.

Lucy.

Lucy. No, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal So, come to me preſently, and I'll give you another letter to Sir Lucius;--- but mind Lucy--- if ever you betray what you are entruſted with --- (unleſs it be other people's ſecrets to me) you forfeit my malevolence for ever: --- and your being a ſimpleton ſhall be no excuſe for your locality.

[*Exit* Mrs. Malaprop.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha!---So, my dear *ſimplicity*, let me give you a little reſpite --- (*altering her manner*) --- let girls in my ſtation be as fond as they pleaſe of appearing expert, and knowing in their truſts;--- commend me to a maſk of *fillineſs*, and a pair of ſharp eyes for my own intereſt under it!---Let me ſee to what account I have turn'd my *ſimplicity* lately --- (*looks at a paper*) For *abetting Miſs Lydia Languiſh in a deſign of running away with an Enſign!* --- *in money* --- *ſundry times* --- *twelve pound twelve* --- *gowns, five* --- *hats, ruffles, caps,* &c. &c. --- *numberleſs!* --- *From the ſaid Enſign, within this laſt month, ſix guineas and a half.* — About a quarter's pay! --- Item, *from Mrs. Malaprop, for betraying the young people to her* --- when I found matters were likely to be diſcovered --- *two guineas, and a black paduaſoy.* —— Item, *from Mr. Acres, for carrying divers letters* — which I never deliver'd --- *two guineas, and a pair of buckles.* --- Item, *from Sir Lucius O'Trigger* --- *three crowns* --- *two golden pocket-pieces* --- *and a ſilver ſnuff box!* —— Well done, *ſimplicity!* --- yet I was forced to make my Hibernian believe, that he was correſponding, not with the *Aunt*, but with the *Niece:* for, though not over rich, I found he had two much pride and delicacy to ſacrifice the feelings of a gentleman to the neceſſities of his fortune. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I. *Captain* Abſolute's *Lodgings.*

Captain Abſolute *and* Fag.

Fag. SIR, while I was there, Sir Anthony came in: I told him you had ſent me to inquire after his health, and to know if he was at leiſure to ſee you.

Abſ.

Abſ. What did he ſay, on hearing I was at Bath?

Fag. Sir, in my life I never ſaw an elderly gentleman more aſtoniſhed! He ſtarted back two or three paces, rapt out a dozen interjectoral oaths, and aſked, what the devil had brought you here!

Abſ. Well, Sir, and what did you ſay?

Fag. O, I lied, Sir—I forgot the preciſe lie, but you may depend on't; he got no truth from me. Yet, with ſubmiſſion, for fear of blunders in future, I ſhould be glad to fix what *has* brought us to Bath: in order that we may lie a little conſiſtently.—Sir Anthony's ſervants were curious, Sir, very curious indeed.

Abſ. You have ſaid nothing to them———?

Fag. O, not a word, Sir—not a word.—Mr. Thomas, indeed, the coachman (whom I take to be the diſcreeteſt of whips)—

Abſ. S'death!—you raſcal! you have not truſted him!

Fag. O, *no*, Sir—no—no—not a ſyllable, upon my veracity!—He was indeed, a little inquiſitive; but I was ſly, Sir—deviliſh ſly!—My Maſter (ſaid I) honeſt Thomas (you know, Sir, one ſays *honeſt* to one's inferiors) is come to Bath to *recruit*—Yes, Sir—I ſaid, *to recruit*—and whether for men, money, or conſtitution, you know, Sir, is nothing to him, nor any one elſe.

Abſ. Well—*recruit* will do—let it be ſo——

Fag. O, Sir, recruit will do ſurpriſingly—indeed, to give the thing an air, I told Thomas, that your Honour had already inliſted, five diſbanded chairmen, ſeven minority waiters, and thirteen billiard markers.

Abſ. You blockhead, never ſay more than is neceſſary.

Fag. I beg pardon, Sir—I beg pardon—But with ſubmiſſion, a lie is nothing unleſs one ſupports it.—Sir, whenever I draw on my invention for a good current lie, I always forge *indorſements*, as well as the bill.

Abſ. Well, take care you don't hurt your credit, by offering too much ſecurity.—Is Mr. Faulkland returned?

Fag. He is above, Sir, changing his dreſs.

Abſ.

Abſ. Can you tell whether he has been informed of Sir Anthony's and Miſs Melville's arrival?

Fag. I fancy not, Sir; he has ſeen no one ſince he came in, but his gentleman, who was with him at Briſtol.—I think, Sir, I hear Mr. Faulkland coming down—

Abſ. Go tell him, I am here.

Fag. Yes, Sir---*(going)* I beg pardon, Sir, but ſhould Sir Anthony call, you will do me the favour to remember, that we are *recruiting*, if you pleaſe.

Abſ. Well, well.

Fag. And in tenderneſs to my character, if your Honour could bring in the chairmen and waiters, I ſhall eſteem it as an obligation;---for though I never ſcruple a lie to ſerve my Maſter, yet it *hurts* one's conſcience, to be found out. [*Exit.*

Abſ. Now for my whimſical friend---if he does not know that his miſtreſs is here, I'll teaſe him a little before I tell him———

Enter Faulkland.

Faulkland, your welcome to Bath again; you are punctual in your return.

Faulk. Yes; I had nothing to detain me, when I had finiſhed the buſineſs I went on. Well, what news ſince I left you? How ſtand matters between you and Lydia?

Abſ. Faith, much as they were; I have not ſeen her ſince our quarrel, however I expect to be recalled every hour.

Faulk. Why don't you perſuade her to go off with you at once?

Abſ. What, and loſe two thirds of her fortune? You forget that my friend.---No, no, I could have brought her to that long ago.

Faulk. Nay then, you trifle too long---if you are ſure of *her*, propoſe to the aunt *in your own character*, and write to Sir Anthony for his conſent.

Abſ. Softly, ſoftly, for though I am convinced my little Lydia would elope with me as Enſign Beverley, yet am I by no means certain that ſhe would take me with the impediment of our friend's conſent, a regular

humdrum wedding, and the reverſion of a good fortune on my ſide; no, no, I muſt prepare her gradually for the diſcovery, and make myſelf neceſſary to her, before I riſk it——Well, but Faulkland, you'll dine with us to-day at the Hotel?

Faulk. Indeed I cannot: I am not in ſpirits to be of ſuch a party.

Abſ. By Heavens! I ſhall forſwear your company. You are the moſt teaſing, captious, incorrigible lover!——Do love like a man.

Faulk. I own I am unfit for company.

Abſ. Am not *I* a lover; aye, and a romantic one too? Yet do I carry every where with me ſuch a confounded farago of doubts, fears, hopes, wiſhes, and all the flimſy furniture of a country Miſs's brain!

Faulk. Ah! Jack, your heart and ſoul are not, like mine, fixed immutably on one only object.---You throw for a large ſtake, but loſing---you could ſtake, and throw again:---but I have ſet my ſum of happineſs on this caſt, and not to ſucceed, were to be ſtript of all.

Abſ. But for Heaven's ſake! what grounds for apprehenſion can your whimſical brain conjure up at preſent? Has Julia miſs'd writing this laſt poſt? or was her laſt too tender, or too cool; or too grave, or too gay; or——

Faulk. Nay, nay, Jack.

Abſ. Why, her love---her honour---her prudence, you cannot doubt.

Faulk. O! upon my ſoul, I never have;---but what grounds for apprehenſion did you ſay? Heavens! are there not a thouſand! I fear for her ſpirits---her health---her life.---My abſence may fret her; her anxiety for my return, her fears for me, may oppreſs her gentle temper. And for her health---does not every hour bring me cauſe to be alarmed? If it rains, ſome ſhower may even then have chilled her delicate frame! ---If the wind be keen, ſome rude blaſt may have affected her! The heat of noon, the dews of the evening, may endanger the life of her, for whom only I value mine. O! Jack, when delicate and feeling ſouls are ſeparated, there is not a feature in the ſky, not

not a movement of the elements; not an aſpiration of the breeze, but hints ſome cauſe for a lover's apprehenſion!

Abſ. Aye, but we may chooſe whether we will take the hint or no.---Well then, Faulkland, if you were convinced that Julia was well and in ſpirits, you would be entirely content.

Faulk. I ſhould be happy beyond meaſure——I'm anxious only for that.

Abſ. Then to cure your anxiety at once---Miſs Melville is in perfect health, and is at this moment in Bath.

Faulk. Nay Jack---don't trifle with me.

Abſ. She is arrived here with my father within this hour.

Faulk. Can you be ſerious?

Abſ. I thought you knew Sir Anthony better than to be ſurprized at a ſudden whim of this kind.——Seriouſly then, it is as I tell you---upon my honour.

Faulk. My dear friend!——Hollo, Du-Peigne! my hat---my dear Jack---*now nothing on earth can give me a moment's uneaſineſs.*

Enter Fag.

Fag. Sir, Mr. Acres juſt arrived is below.

Abſ. Stay, Faulkland, this Acres lives within a mile of Sir Anthony, and he ſhall tell you how your miſtreſs has been ever ſince you left her.---Fag, ſhew the gentleman up. [*Exit* Fag.

Faulk. What, is he much acquainted in the family?

Abſ. O, very intimate: I inſiſt on your not going: beſides, his character will divert you.

Faulk. Well, I ſhould like to aſk him a few queſtions.

Abſ. He is likewiſe a rival of mine---that is of my *other ſelf's*, for he does not think his friend Capt. Abſolute ever ſaw the lady in queſtion;--- and it is ridiculous enough to hear him complain to me of *one Beverley* a concealed ſculking rival, who——

Faulk. Huſh!—He's here.

Enter Acres.

Acres. Hah! my dear friend, noble captain, and honeſt Jack, how doſt thou? juſt arrived faith, as

you ſee.—Sir, your humble ſervant. Warm work on the roads Jack—Odds, whips and wheels, I've travelled like a Comet, with a tail of duſt all the way as long as the Mall.

Abſ. Ah! Bob, you are indeed an excentric Planet, but we know your attraction hither—give me leave to introduce Mr. Faulkland to you; Mr. Faulkland, Mr. Acres.

Acres. Sir, I am moſt heartily glad t ſee you: Sir, I ſolicit your connections.—Hey Jack—what this is Mr. Faulkland, who———

Abſ. Aye, Bob, Miſs Melville's Mr. Faulkland.

Acres. Od'ſo! ſhe and your father can be but juſt arrived before me—I ſuppoſe you have ſeen them. —Ah! Mr. Faulkland, you are indeed a happy man.

Faulk. I have not ſeen Miſs Melville yet, Sir—— I hope ſhe enjoyed full health and ſpirits in Devonſhire.

Acres. Never knew her better in my life, Sir,—never better.—Odd's Bluſhes and Blooms! ſhe has been as healthy as the German Spa.

Faulk. Indeed!—I did hear that ſhe had been a little indiſpoſed.

Acres. Falſe, falſe, Sir—only ſaid to vex you: quite the reverſe I aſſure you.

Faulk. There, Jack, you ſee ſhe has the advantage of me: I had almoſt fretted myſelf ill.

Abſ. Now are you angry with your miſtreſs for not having been ſick

Faulk. No, no, you miſunderſtand me:—yet ſurely a little trifling indiſpoſition is not an unnatural conſequence of abſence from thoſe we love.—Now confeſs—isn't there ſomething unkind in this violent, roburſt, unfeeling heal.h?

Abſ. O, it was very unkind of her to be well in your abſence to be ſure!

Acres. Good apartments, Jack.

Faulk. Well Sir, but you were ſaying that Miſs Melville had been ſo *exceedingly* well—what then ſhe has been merry and gay I ſuppoſe?—Always in ſpirits —hey?

Acres. Merry, Odds Crickets! ſhe has been the bell and ſpirit of the company wherever ſhe has been

been—ſo lively and entertaining! ſo full of wit and humour!

Faulk. There, Jack, there.—O, by my ſoul! there is an innate levity in woman, that nothing can overcome.—What! happy and I away!

Abſ. Have done: how fooliſh this is! juſt now you were only apprehenſive for your miſtreſs's *ſpirits.*

Faulk. Why Jack, have I been the joy and ſpirit of the company?

Abſ. No indeed, you have not.

Faulk. Have I been lively and entertaining?

Abſ. O, upon my word, I acquit you.

Faulk. Have I been full of wit and humour?

Abſ. No, faith, to do you juſtice, you have been confounded ſtupid indeed.

Acres. What's the matter with the gentleman?

Abſ. He is only expreſſing his great ſatisfaction at hearing that Julia has been ſo well and happy—— that's all—hey, Faulkland?

Faulk. Oh! I am rejoiced to hear it—yes, yes, ſhe has a *happy* diſpoſition!

Acres. That ſhe has indeed—then ſhe is ſo accompliſhed—ſo ſweet a voice—ſo expert at her Harpſichord—ſuch a miſtreſs of flat and ſharp, ſquallante, rumblante, and quiverante!—there was this time month——Odds Minnums and Crotchets! how ſhe did chirup at Mrs. Piano's Concert.

Faulk. There again, what ſay you to this? you ſee ſhe has been all mirth and ſong—not a thought of me!

Abſ. Pho! man, is not muſic the food of love?

Faulk. Well, well, it may be ſo.—Pray Mr.—— what's his d—d name?—Do you remember what ſongs Miſs Melville ſung?

Acres. Not I, indeed.

Abſ. Stay now, they were ſome pretty, melancholy, purling ſtream airs, I warrant; perhaps you may recollect:—did ſhe ſing—'*When abſent from my ſoul's delight?*'

Acres. No, that wa'n't it.

Abſ. Or—'*Go, gentle Gales!*'—"*Go, gentle Gales!*" (ſings.)

Acres. O no! nothing like it—Odds flips? now I recollect one of them—'*My heart's my own, my will is free.*' (ſings)

Faulk. Fool! fool that I am! to fix all my hapineſs on ſuch a trifler! S'death! to make herſelf the pipe and ballad-monger of a circle! to ſooth her light heart with catches and glees!—What can you ſay to this, Sir?

Abſ. Why, that I ſhould be glad to hear my miſtreſs had been ſo merry, *Sir.*

Faulk. Nay, nay, nay—I am not ſorry that ſhe has been happy—no, no, I am glad of that—I would not have her ſad or ſick—yet ſurely a ſympathetic heart would have ſhewn itſelf even in the choice of a ſong—ſhe might have been temperately healthy, and ſomehow, plaintively gay;—but ſhe has been dancing too, I doubt not!

Acres. What does the gentleman ſay about dancing?

Abſ. He ſays the lady we ſpeak of dances as well as ſhe ſings.

Acres. Aye truly, does ſhe—there was at our laſt race-ball———

Faulk. Hell and the devil! There! there!—I told you ſo! I told you ſo! Oh! ſhe thrives in my abſence!—Dancing! but her whole feelings have been in oppoſition with mine! I have been anxious, ſilent, penſive, ſedentary—my days have been hours of care, my nights of watchfulneſs.—She has been all Health! Spirit! Laugh! Song! Dance!—Oh! d—n'd, d—n'd levity!

Abſ. For Heaven's ſake! Faulkland, don't expoſe yourſelf ſo.——Suppoſe ſhe has danced, what then?—does not the ceremony of ſociety often oblige———

Faulk. Well, well, I'll contain myſelf—perhaps, as you ſay—for form ſake.—What, Mr. Acres, you were praiſing Miſs Melville's manner of dancing a *minuet*—hey?

Acres. O I dare inſure her for that—but what I was going to ſpeak of was her *country dancing:*—Odd's ſwimmings! ſhe had ſuch an air with her!———

Faulk. Now diſappointment on her!—defend this, Abſolute, why don't you defend this?—Country-dances!

dances! jiggs, and reels! am I to blame now? A Minuet I could have forgiven—I ſhould not have minded that—I ſay I ſhould not have regarded a Minuet—but *Country-dances!* Z———ds! had ſhe made one in a *Cotillon*—I believe I could have forgiven even that—but to be monkey-led for a night! to run the gauntlet thro' a ſtring of amorous palming puppies! —to ſhew paces like a managed filly!—O Jack, there never can be but *one* man in the world, whom a truly modeſt and delicate woman ought to pair with in a *Country-dance*; and even then, the reſt of the couples ſhould be her great uncles and aunts!

Abſ. Aye, to be ſure!—grand-fathers and grand-mothers!

Faulk. If there be but one vicious mind in the Set, 'twill ſpread like a contagion—the action of their pulſe beats to the laſcivious movement of the jigg—their quivering, warm-breath'd ſighs impregnate the very air—the atmoſphere becomes electrical to love, and each amorous ſpark darts thro' every link of the chain!—I muſt leave you—I own I am ſomewhat flurried—and that confounded looby has perceived it. [*Going.*

Abſ. Aye, aye, you are in a hurry to throw yourſelf at Julia's feet.

Faulk. I'm not in a humour to be trifled with—— I ſhall ſee her only to upbraid her. [*Going.*

Abſ. Nay, but ſtay Faulkland, and thank Mr. Acres for his good news.

Faulk. D—n his news! [*Exit* Faulkland.

Abſ. Ha! ha! ha! poor Faulkland five minutes ſince—'nothing on earth could give him a moment's uneaſineſs!'

Acres. The gentleman wa'n't angry at my praiſing his miſtreſs, was he?

Abſ. A little jealous, I believe, Bob.

Acres. You don't ſay ſo? Ha! ha! jealous of me —that's a good joke.

Abſ. There's nothing ſtrange in that, Bob: let me tell you, that ſprightly grace and inſinuating manner of your's will do ſome miſchief among the girls here.

Abſ. Ah! you joke—ha! ha! miſchief—ha! ha! but you know I am not my own property, my dear Lydia, has foreſtalled me.———She could never abide me in the country, becauſe I uſed to dreſs ſo badly—but odds frogs and tambours! I ſhan't take matters ſo here—now ancient Madam has no voice in it—I'll make my old clothes know who's maſter—I ſhall ſtraitway caſhier the hunting-frock—and render my leather breeches incapable—My hair has been in training ſome time.

Abſ. Indeed!

Acres. Aye——and tho'ff the ſide-curls are a little reſtive, my hind-part takes to it very kindly.

Abſ. O, you'll poliſh, I doubt not.

Acres. Abſolutely I propoſe ſo---then if I can find out this Enſign Beverley, odds triggers and flints! I'll make him know the difference o't.

Abſ. Spoke like a man——but pray, Bob, I obſerve you have got an odd kind of a new method of ſwearing———

Acres. Ha! ha! you've taken notice of it---'tis genteel, is'n't ?---I didn't invent it myſelf though; but a commander in our militia---a great ſcholar, I aſſure you---ſays that there is no meaning in the common oaths, and that nothing but their antiquity makes them reſpectable;---becauſe, he ſays, the ancients would never ſtick to an oath or two, but would ſay By Jove! or by Bacchus! or by Mars! or by Venus! or by Pallas! according to the ſentiment---ſo that to ſwear with propriety, ſays my little Major, the 'oath ſhould be an eccho to the ſenſe;' and this we call the *oath referential*, or *ſentimental ſwearing*—ha! ha! ha! 'tis genteel, isn't it ?

Abſ. Very genteel, and very new indeed—and I dare ſay will ſupplant all other figures of imprecation.

Acres. Aye, aye, the beſt terms will grow obſolete———D---ns have had their day.

Enter Fag.

Fag. Sir, there is a gentleman below deſires to ſee you --ſhall I ſhew him into the parlour ?

Abſ. Aye---you may.

Acres. Well, I muſt be gone———

Abſ.

Abſ. Stay; who is it, Fag?

Fag. Your father, Sir.

Abſ. You puppy, why didn't you ſhew him up directly? [*Exit* Fag.

Acres. You have buſineſs with Sir Anthony.--- I expect a meſſage from Mrs. Malaprop at my lodgings--- I have ſent alſo to my dear friend Sir Lucius O'Trigger. --- Adieu, Jack, we muſt meet at night --- Odds bottles and glaſſes! you ſhall give me a dozen bumpers to little Lydia.

Abſ. That I will with all my heart. [*Exit* Acres.

Abſ. Now for a parental lecture --- I hope he has heard nothing of the buſineſs that has brought me here. --- I wiſh the gout had held him faſt in Devonſhire, with all my ſoul!

Enter Sir Anthony.

Abſ. Sir, I am delighted to ſee you here; and looking ſo well! --- your ſudden arrival at Bath made me apprehenſive for your health.

Sir Anth. Very apprehenſive, I dare ſay, Jack.--- What, you are recruiting here, hey?

Abſ. Yes, Sir, I am on duty.

Sir Anth. Well, Jack, I am glad to ſee you, tho' I did not expect it, for I was going to write to you on a little matter of buſineſs.--- Jack, I have been conſidering that I grow old and infirm, and ſhall probably not trouble you long.

Abſ. Pardon me, Sir, I never ſaw you look more ſtrong and hearty; and I pray frequently that you may continue ſo.

Sir Anth. I hope your prayers may be heard with all my heart. Well then, Jack, I have been conſidering that I am ſo ſtrong and hearty, I may continue to plague you a long time. --- Now, Jack, I am ſenſible that the income of your commiſſion, and what I have hitherto allowed you, is but a ſmall pittance for a lad of your ſpirit.

Abſ. Sir, you are very good.

Sir Anth. And it is my wiſh, while yet I live, to have my Boy make ſome figure in the world. --- I have reſolved, therefore, to fix you at once in a noble independence.

Abſ. Sir, your kindneſs overpowers me --- ſuch generoſity makes the gratitude of reaſon more lively than the ſenſations even of filial affection.

Sir Anth. I am glad you are ſo ſenſible of my attention --- and you ſhall be maſter of a large eſtate in a few weeks.

Abſ. Let my future life, Sir, ſpeak my gratitude: I cannot expreſs the ſenſe I have of your munificence. --- Yet, Sir, I preſume you would not wiſh me to quit the army?

Sir Anth. O, that ſhall be as your wife chooſes.

Abſ. My wife, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye, aye, ſettle that between you ——— ſettle that between you.

Abſ. A *wife*, Sir, did you ſay?

Sir Anth. Aye, a wife — why; did not I mention her before?

Abſ. Not a word of it, Sir.

Sir Anth. Odd ſo! — I muſtn't forget *her* tho'. — Yes, Jack, the independence I was talking of is by a marriage — the fortune is ſaddled with a wife — but I ſuppoſe that makes no difference.

Abſ. Sir! Sir! — you amaze me!

Sir Anth. Why, what the d—l's the matter with the fool? Juſt now you were all gratitude and duty.

Abſ. I was, Sir, — you talked to me of independence and a fortune, but not a word of a wife.

Sir Anth. Why — what difference does that make? Odd's life, Sir! if you have the eſtate, you muſt take it with the live ſtock on it, as it ſtands.

Abſ. If my happineſs is to be the price, I muſt beg leave to decline the purchaſe.—Pray, Sir, who is the lady?

Sir Anth. What's that to you, Sir? — Come, give me your promiſe to love, and to marry her directly.

Abſ Sure, Sir, this is not very reaſonable, to ſummon my affections for a lady I know nothing of!

Sir Anth. I am ſure, Sir, 'tis more unreaſonable in you to *object* to a lady you know nothing of.

Abſ. Then, Sir, I muſt tell you plainly, that my inclinations are fix'd on another,

Sir Anth.

Sir Anth. They are, are they? well, that's lucky — becauſe you will have more merit in your obedience to me.

Abſ. Sir, my heart is engaged to an Angel.

Sir Anth. Then pray let it ſend an excuſe. — It is very ſorry —— but *buſineſs* prevents it's waiting on her.

Abſ. But my vows are pledged to her.

Sir Anth. Let her foreclose, Jack; let her foreclose; they are not worth redeeming: beſides, you have the Angel's vows in exchange, I ſuppoſe; ſo there can be no loſs there.

Abſ. You muſt excuſe me, Sir, if I tell you, once for all, that in this point I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Hark'ee Jack; — I have heard you for ſome time with patience — I have been cool, — quite cool: --- but take care --- you know I am compliance itſelf --- when I am not thwarted; --- no one more eaſily led --- when I have my own way; --- but don't put me in a phrenzy.

Abſ. Sir, I muſt repeat it --- in this I cannot obey you.

Sir Anth. Now, d---n me! if ever I call you *Jack* again while I live!

Abſ. Nay, Sir, but hear me.

Sir Anth. Sir, I won't hear a word --- not a word! not one word! ſo give me your promiſe by a nod --- and I'll tell you what, Jack --- I mean, you Dog --- if you don't, by ———

Abſ. What, Sir, promiſe to link myſelf to ſome maſs of uglineſs! to ———

Sir Anth. Z---ds! ſirrah! the lady ſhall be as ugly as I chooſe: ſhe ſhall have a hump on each ſhoulder; ſhe ſhall be as crooked as the Creſcent; her one eye ſhall roll like the Bull's in Cox's Muſæum --- ſhe ſhall have a ſkin like a mummy, and the beard of a Jew --- ſhe ſhall be all this, ſirrah! --- yet I'll make you ogle her all day, and ſit up all night to write ſonnets on her beauty.

Abſ. This is reaſon and moderation indeed!

Sir Anth. None of your ſneering, puppy! no grinning, jackanapes!

Abſ.

Abſ. Indeed, Sir, I never was in a worſe humour for mirth in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis falſe, Sir! I know you are laughing in your ſleeve: I know you'll grin when I am gone, ſirrah!

Abſ. Sir, I hope I know my duty better.

Sir Anth. None of your paſſion, Sir! none of your violence! if you pleaſe.--- It won't do with me, I promiſe you.

Abſ. Indeed, Sir, I never was cooler in my life.

Sir Anth. 'Tis a confounded lie!--- I know you are in a paſſion in your heart; I know you are, you hypocritical young dog! but it won't do.

Abſ. Nay, Sir, upon my word.

Sir Anth. So you will fly out! can't you be cool, like me? What the devil good can *Paſſion* do! — *Paſſion* is of no ſervice, you impudent, inſolent, overbearing Reprobate! — There you ſneer again! — don't provoke me! — but you rely upon the mildneſs of my temper — you do, you Dog! you play upon the weakneſs of my diſpoſition! Yet take care — the patience of a ſaint may be overcome at laſt! — but mark! I give you ſix hours and a half to conſider of this: if you then agree, without any condition, to do every thing on earth that I chooſe, why — confound you! I may in time forgive you — If not, z——ds! don't enter the ſame hemiſphere with me! don't dare to breathe the ſame air, or uſe the ſame light with me; but get an atmoſphere and ſun of your own! I'll ſtrip you of your commiſſion; I'll lodge a five-and-three-pence in the hands of truſtees, and you ſhall live on the intereſt. — I'll diſown you, I'll diſinherit you, I'll unget you! and — d—n me, if ever I call you Jack again!

[*Exit* Sir Anthony.

Abſolute, *ſolus.*

Abſ. Mild, gentle, conſiderate father — I kiſs your hands. — What a tender method of giving his opinion in theſe matters Sir Anthony has! I dare not truſt him with the truth. — I wonder what old, wealthy Hag it is that he wants to beſtow on me! — yet he married himſelf for love! and was in his youth a bold Intriguer, and a gay Companion!

Enter

Enter Fag.

Fag. Aſſuredly, Sir, our Father is wrath to a degree; he comes down ſtairs eight or ten ſteps at a time — muttering, growling, and thumping the banniſters all the way: I and the Cook's dog, ſtand bowing at the door — rap! he gives me a ſtroke on the head with his cane; bids me carry that to my maſter, then kicking the poor Turnſpit into the area, d—ns us all, for a puppy triumvirate! — Upon my credit, Sir, were I in your place, and found my father ſuch very bad company, I ſhould certainly drop his acquaintance.

Abſ. Ceaſe your impertinence, Sir, at preſent. --- Did you come in for nothing more? --- Stand out of the way! [*Puſhes him aſide, and Exit.*

Fag, *ſolus.*

Fag. Soh! Sir Anthony trims my Maſter; He is afraid to reply to his Father --- then vents his ſpleen on poor Fag! --- When one is vexed by one perſon, to revenge one's ſelf on another, who happens to come in the way --- is the vileſt injuſtice! Ah! it ſhews the worſt temper -- the baſeſt ———

Enter Errand-Boy.

Boy. Mr. Fag! Mr. Fag! your Maſter calls you.

Fag. Well, you little, dirty puppy, you need not baul ſo! --- The meaneſt diſpoſition! the ———

Boy. Quick, quick, Mr. Fag.

Fag. *Quick, quick*, you impudent Jackanapes! am I to be commanded by you too? you little, impertinent, inſolent, kitchen-bred ———

[*Exit kicking and beating him.*

SCENE II. *The* North Parade.

Enter Lucy.

Lucy. So --- I ſhall have another Rival to add to my miſtreſs's liſt --- Captain Abſolute. --- However, I ſhall not enter his name till my purſe has received notice in form. Poor Acres is diſmiſſed! - - Well, I have done him a laſt friendly office, in letting him know that Beverley was here before him. --- Sir Lucius is generally more punctual, when he expects to hear from his *dear Dalia*, as he calls her: --- I wonder he's not here! --- I have a little ſcruple of conſcience from this deceit; tho' I ſhould not be paid ſo well, if my hero knew that

Delia

Delia was near fifty, and her own miſtreſs. --- I could not have thought he would have been ſo nice, when there's a golden egg in the caſe, as to care whether he has it from a pullet or an old hen!

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Sir Luc. Hah! my little embaſſadreſs --- upon my conſcience I have been looking for you; I have been on the South Parade this half-hour.

Lucy. (Speaking ſimply) O gemini! and I have been waiting for your worſhip here on the North.

Sir Luc. Faith! --- may be, that was the reaſon we did not meet; and it is very comical too, how you could go out and I not ſee you --- for I was only taking a nap at the Parade-Coffee-houſe, and I choſe the *window* on purpoſe that I might not miſs you.

Lucy. My ſtars! Now I'd wager a ſix-pence I went by while you were aſleep.

Sir Luc. Sure enough it muſt have been ſo --- and I never dreamt it was ſo late, till I waked. Well, but my little girl, have you got nothing for me?

Lucy. Yes, but I have: --- I've got a letter for you in my pocket.

Sir Luc. O faith! I gueſſed you weren't come empty-handed --- well --- let me ſee what the dear creature ſays.

Lucy. There, Sir Lucius. *(Gives him a letter.)*

Sir Luc. (Reads) "*Sir --- there is often a ſudden in-*
"*centive impulſe in love, that has a greater induction*
"*than years of domeſtic combination: ſuch was the com-*
"*motion I felt at the firſt ſuperfluous view of Sir Lucius*
"*O'Trigger.*" Very pretty, upon my word. "*As my*
"*motive is intereſted, you may be aſſured my love ſhall*
"*never be miſcellaneous.*" Very well. "*Female punc-*
"*tuation forbids me to ſay more; yet let me add, that*
"*it will give me joy infallible to find Sir Lucius*
"*worthy the laſt criterion of my affections. --- Yours,*
"*while meretricious.* ——— DELIA."
Upon my conſcience! Lucy, your lady is a great miſtreſs of language. --- Faith, ſhe's quite the queen of the dictionary! --- for the devil a word dare refuſe coming at her call --- tho' one would think it was quite out of hearing.

Lucy.

Lucy. Aye, Sir, a lady of her experience.

Sir Luc. Experience! what, at ſeventeen?

Lucy. O true, Sir — but then ſhe reads ſo — my ſtars! how ſhe will read off-hand!

Sir Luc. Faith, ſhe muſt be very deep read to write this way — tho' ſhe is rather an arbitrary writer too — for here are a great many poor words preſſed into the ſervice of this note, that would get their *habeas corpus* from any court in Chriſtendom. — However, when affection guides the pen, Lucy, he muſt be a brute who finds fault with the ſtyle.

Lucy. Ah! Sir Lucius, if you were to hear how ſhe talks of you!

Sir Luc. O tell her, I'll make her the beſt huſband in the world, and Lady O'Trigger into the bargain! — But we muſt get the old gentlewoman's conſent — and do every thing fairly.

Lucy. Nay, Sir Lucius, I thought you wa'n't rich enough to be ſo nice!

Sir Luc. Upon my word, young woman, you have hit it: — I am ſo poor that I can't afford to do a dirty action. — If I did not want money I'd ſteal your miſtreſs and her fortune with a great deal of pleaſure. — However, my pretty girl, *(gives her money)* here's a little ſomething to buy you a ribband; and meet me in the evening, and I'll give you an anſwer to this. So, huſſy, take a kiſs before-hand, to put you in mind. *(Kiſſes her.)*

Lucy. O lud! Sir Lucius — I never ſeed ſuch a gemman! My lady won't like you if you're ſo impudent.

Sir Luc. Faith ſhe will, Lucy — that ſame — pho! what's the name of it? -- *Modeſty!* --- is a quality in a lover more praiſed by the women than liked; ſo, if your miſtreſs aſks you whether Sir Lucius ever gave you a kiſs, tell her *fifty* --- my dear.

Lucy. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir Luc. What, would you have me tell her a lie?

Sir Luc. Ah then, you baggage! I'll make it a truth preſently.

Lucy. For ſhame now; here is ſome one coming.

Sir Luc. O faith, I'll quiet your conſcience!

[*Sees* Fag. --- *Exit, humming a Tune.*

Enter

Enter Fag.

Fag. So, ſo, Ma'am. I humbly beg pardon.

Lucy. O lud! --- now, Mr. Fag --- you flurry one ſo.

Fag. Come, come, Lucy, here's no one bye --- ſo a little leſs ſimplicity, with a grain or two more ſincerity, if you pleaſe. --- You play falſe with us, Madam. --- I ſaw you give the Baronet a letter. --- My Maſter ſhall know this --- and if he don't call him out --- I will.

Lucy. Ha! ha! ha! you gentlemen's gentlemen are ſo haſty. --- That letter was from Mrs. Malaprop, ſimpleton --- She is taken with Sir Lucius's addreſs.

Fag. What taſtes ſome people have! --- Why I ſuppoſe I have walked by her window an hundred times --- But what ſays our young lady? Any meſſage to my maſter?

Lucy. Sad news! Mr. Fag --- A worſe Rival than Acres! --- Sir Anthony Abſolute has propoſed his ſon.

Fag. What, Captain Abſolute?

Lucy. Even ſo. --- I overheard it all.

Fag. Ha! ha! ha! --- very good, faith. --- Good-bye. Lucy, I muſt away with this news.

Lucy. Well --- you may laugh --- but it is true, I aſſure you. *(Going.)* But --- Mr. Fag --- tell your maſter not to be caſt down by this.

Fag. O he'll be ſo diſconſolate!

Lucy. And charge him not to think of quarrelling with young Abſolute.

Fag Never fear! --- never fear!

Lucy. Be ſure --- bid him keep up his ſpirits.

Fag. We will --- we will. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The* North Parade.

Enter Abſolute.

'TIS juſt as Fag told me, indeed --- Whimſical enough, faith! My Father wants to *force* me to marry the very girl I am plotting to run away with! --- He muſt not know of my connection with her yet a-while. --- He has too ſummary a method of proceeding

ing in theſe matters --- and Lydia ſhall not yet loſe her hopes of an elopement. --- However, I'll read my recantation inſtantly. --- My converſion is ſomething ſudden, indeed --- but I can aſſure him it is very *ſincere*.--- So, ſo --- here he comes. --- He looks laguy gruff.

[*Steps aſide.*

Enter Sir Anthony.

No --- I ll die ſooner than forgive him. --- *Die*, did I ſay? I'll live theſe fifty years to plague him. --- At our laſt meeting, his impudence had almoſt put me out of temper. --- An obſtinate, paſſionate, ſelf-willed boy! --- Who can he take after? This is my return for getting him before all his brothers and ſiſters! --- for putting him, at twelve years old, into a marching regiment, and allowing him fifty pounds a-year, beſide his pay ever ſince! --- But I have done with him; --- he's any body's ſon for me --- I never will ſee him more, --- never --- never --- never --- never.

Abſ. Now for a penitential face.

Sir Anth. Fellow, get out of my way.

Abſ Sir, you ſee a penitent before you.

Sir Anth. I ſee an impudent ſcoundrel before me.

Abſ. A ſincere penitent. --- I am come, Sir, to acknowledge my error, and to ſubmit entirely to your will.

Sir Anth. What's that?

Abſ. I have been revolving, and reflecting, and conſidering on your paſt goodneſs, and kindneſs, and condeſcenſion to me.

Sir Anth. Well, Sir?

Abſ. I have been likewiſe weighing and balancing what you were pleaſed to mention concerning duty, and obedience, and authority.

Sir Anth. Well, Puppy?

Abſ. Why then Sir, the reſult of my reflections is --- a reſolution to ſacrifice every inclination of my own to your ſatisfaction.

Sir Anth Why now, you talk ſenſe --- abſolute ſenſe --- I never heard any thing more ſenſible in my life. --- Confound you; you ſhall be *Jack* again.

Abſ. I am happy in the appellation.

Sir Anth. Why, then, Jack, my dear Jack, I will now

now inform you — who the lady really is. — Nothing but your paſſion and violence, you ſilly fellow, prevented my telling you at firſt. Prepare, Jack, for wonder and rapture — prepare. — What think you of Miſs Lydia Languiſh?

Abſ. Languiſh! What, the Languiſhes of Worceſterſhire?

Sir Anth. Worceſterſhire! No. Did you never meet Mrs. Malaprop and her Niece, Miſs Languiſh, who came into our country juſt before you were laſt ordered to your regiment?

Abſ. Malaprop! Languiſh! I don't remember ever to have heard the names before. Yet, ſtay — I think I do recollect ſomething. — *Languiſh! Languiſh!* She ſquints, don't ſhe? — A little, red-haired girl?

Sir Anth. Squints? — A red-haired girl! — Z---ds, no.

Abſ. Then I muſt have forgot; it can't be the ſame perſon.

Sir Anth. Jack! Jack! what think you of blooming, love-breathing ſeventeen?

Abſ. As to that, Sir, I am quite indifferent. --- If I can pleaſe you in the matter, 'tis all I deſire.

Sir Anth. Nay, but Jack, ſuch eyes! ſuch eyes! ſo innocently wild! ſo baſhfully irreſolute! Not a glance but ſpeaks and kindles ſome thought of love! Then, Jack, her cheeks! her cheeks, Jack! ſo deeply bluſhing at the inſinuations of her tell-tale eyes! Then, Jack, her lips! — O Jack, lips ſmiling at their own diſcretion; and if not ſmiling, more ſweetly pouting; more lovely in ſullenneſs!

Abſ. That's ſhe indeed. — Well done, old gentleman!

Sir Anth. Then, Jack, her neck. — O Jack! Jack!

Abſ. And which is to be mine, Sir, the Niece or the Aunt?

Sir Anth. Why you unfeeling, inſenſible Puppy, I deſpiſe you. When I was of your age, ſuch a deſcription would have made me fly like a rocket! The *Aunt*, indeed! — Odds life! when I ran away with your mother, I would not have touched any thing old or ugly to gain an empire.

Abſ. Not to pleaſe your father, Sir?

Sir

Sir Anth. To pleaſe my father! — Z—ds! not to pleaſe — O my father! — Oddſo! — yes — yes! if my father indeed had deſired — that's quite another matter. — Tho' he wa'n't the indulgent father that I am, Jack.

Abſ. I dare ſay not, Sir.

Sir Anth. But, Jack, you are not ſorry to find your miſtreſs is ſo beautiful.

Abſ. Sir, I repeat it; if I pleaſe you in this affair, 'tis all I deſire. Not that I think a woman the worſe for being handſome; but, Sir, if you pleaſe to recollect, you before hinted ſomething about a hump or two, one eye, and a few more graces of that kind — now, without being very nice, I own I ſhould rather chuſe a wife of mine to have the uſual number of limbs, and a limited quantity of back: and tho' *one* eye may be very agreeable, yet as the prejudice has always run in favour of *two*, I would not wiſh to affect a ſingularity in that article.

Sir Anth. What a phlegmatic ſot it is! Why ſirrah, you're an anchorite! — a vile inſenſible ſtock. — You a ſoldier! --- you're a walking block, fit only to duſt the company's regimentals on! --- Odds life! I've a great mind to marry the girl myſelf!

Abſ. I am entirely at your diſpoſal, Sir; if you ſhould think of addreſſing Miſs Languiſh yourſelf, I ſuppoſe you would have me marry the *Aunt*; or if you ſhould change you're mind, and take the old lady --- 'tis the ſame to me --- I'll marry the *Niece*.

Sir Anth. Upon my word, Jack, thou'rt either a very great hypocrite, or ——— but, come, I know your indifference on ſuch a ſubject muſt be all a lie — I'm ſure it muſt — come, now — d—n your demure face! — come, confeſs, Jack --- you have been lying --- ha'n't you? You have been lying, hey? I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't: -- ſo now, own, my dear Jack, you have been playing the hypocrite, hey! --- I'll never forgive you, if you ha'n't been lying and playing the hypocrite.

Abſ. I'm ſorry, Sir, that the reſpect and duty which I bear to you ſhould be ſo miſtaken.

Sir Anth. Hang your reſpect and duty! But come along with me, I'll write a note to Mrs. Malaprop, and you ſhall viſit the lady directly.

Abſ.

Abſ. Where does ſhe lodge, Sir?

Sir Anth. What a dull queſtion!---only on the Grove here.

Abſ. O! then I can call on her in my way to the coffe-houſe.

Sir Anth. In your way to the coffee-houſe! You'll ſet your heart down in your way to the coffee-houſe, hey? Ah! you leaden-nerv'd, wooden-hearted dolt! But come along, you ſhall ſee her directly; her eyes ſhall be the Promethian torch to you---come along, I'll never forgive you, if you don't come back, ſtark mad with rapture and impatience---if you don't, egad, I'll marry the girl myſelf! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. Julia's *Dreſſing-room.*

Faulkland, *ſolus.*

Faulk. They told me Julia would return directly; wonder ſhe is not yet come!—How mean does this captious, unſatisfied temper of mine appear to my cooler judgment! Yet I know not that I indulge it in any other point:—but on this one ſubject, and to this one object, whom I think I love beyond my life, I am ever ungenerouſly fretful, and madly capricious!---I am conſcious of it---yet I cannot correct myſelf! What tender, honeſt joy ſparkled in her eyes when we met! ---How delicate was the warmth of her expreſſions!--- I was aſhamed to appear leſs happy---though I had come reſolved to wear a face of coolneſs and upbraiding. Sir Anthony's preſence prevented my propoſed expoſtulations:---yet I muſt be ſatisfied that ſhe has not been ſo *very* happy in my abſence.---She is coming!--- Yes!---I know the nimbleneſs of her tread, when ſhe thinks her impatient Faulkland counts the moments of her ſtay.

Enter Julia.

Jul. I had not hop'd to ſee you again ſo ſoon.

Faulk. Could I, Julia, be contented with my firſt welcome---reſtrained as we were by the preſence of a third perſon?

Jul. O Faulkland, when your kindneſs can make me thus happy, let me not think that I diſcovered more coolneſs in your firſt ſalutation than my long-hoarded joy could have preſaged.

Faulk.

Faulk. 'Twas but your fancy, Julia.---I *was* rejoiced to ſee you---to ſee you in ſuch health---Sure I had no cauſe for coldneſs?

Jul. Nay then, I ſee you have taken ſomething ill. ---You muſt not conceal from me what it is.

Faulk. Well then---ſhall I own to you---but you will deſpiſe me, Julia---nay, I deſpiſe myſelf for it.---Yet I *will* own, that my joy at hearing of your health and arrival here, by your neighbour Acres, was ſomething damped, by his dwelling much on the high ſpirits you had enjoyed in Devonſhire---on your mirth---your ſinging---dancing, and I know not what!---For ſuch is my temper, Julia, that I ſhould regard every mirthful moment in your abſence as a treaſon to conſtancy:---The mutual tear that ſteals down the cheek of parting lovers is a compact, that no ſmile ſhall live there till they meet again.

Jul. Muſt I never ceaſe to tax my Faulkland with this teaſing minute caprice?---Can the idle reports of a ſilly boor weigh in your breaſt againſt my tried affection?

Faulk. They have no weight with me, Julia: no, no ---I am happy if you have been ſo---yet only ſay, that you did not ſing with *mirth*---ſay that you *thought* of Faulkland in the dance.

Jul. I never can be happy in your abſence.---If I wear a countenance of content, it is to ſhew that my mind holds no doubt of my Faulkland's truth.---If I ſeem'd ſad---it were to make malice triumph; and ſay, that I had fixed my heart on one, who left me to lament his roving, and my own credulity ---Believe me, Faulkland, I mean not to upbraid you, when I ſay, that I have often dreſſed ſorrow in ſmiles, leſt my friends ſhould gueſs whoſe unkindneſs had cauſed my tears.

Faulk. You were ever all goodneſs to me.---O, I am a brute, when I but admit a doubt of your true conſtancy!

Jul. If ever, without ſuch cauſe from you, as I will not ſuppoſe poſſible, you find my affections veering but a point, may I become a proverbial ſcoff for levity, and baſe ingratitude.

Faulk. Ah! Julia, that *laſt* word is grating to me. I would I had no title to your *gratitude!* Search your heart

heart, Julia; perhaps what you have miſtaken for Love, is but the warm effuſion of a too thankful heart!

Jul. For what quality muſt I love you?

Faulk. For no quality! To regard me for any quality of mind or underſtanding, were only to *eſteem* me. And for perſon---I have often wiſh'd myſelf deformed, to be convinced that I owed no obligation *there* for any part of your affection.

Jul. Where Nature has beſtowed a ſhew of nice attention in the features of a man, he ſhould laugh at it, as miſplaced. I have ſeen men, who in *this* vain article perhaps might rank above you; but my heart has never aſked my eyes if it were ſo or not.

Faulk. Now this is not well from *you*, Julia --- I deſpiſe perſon in man --- Yet if you lov'd me as I wiſh, though I were an Æthiop, you'd think none ſo fair.

Jul. I ſee you are determined to be unkind.—The *contract* which my poor father bound us in gives you more than a lover's privilege.

Faulk. Again, Julia, you raiſe ideas that feed and juſtify my doubts---I would not have been more free---no—I am proud of my reſtraint.—Yet—yet—perhaps your high reſpect alone for this ſolemn compact has fettered your inclinations, which elſe had made worthier choice.—How ſhall I be ſure, had you remained unbound in thought and promiſe, that I ſhould ſtill have been the object of your perſevering love?

Jul. Then try me now.---Let us be free as ſtrangers as to what is paſt: *my* heart will not feel more liberty!

Faulk. There now! ſo haſty, Julia! ſo anxious to be free!---If your love for me were fixed and ardent, you would not looſe your hold, even tho' I wiſh'd it!

Jul. O, you torture me to the heart! --- I cannot bear it.

Faulk. I do not mean to diſtreſs you. --- If I lov'd you leſs, I ſhould never give you an uneaſy moment.--- But hear me.--- All my fretful doubts ariſe from this--- Women are not uſed to weigh, and ſeparate the motives of their affections: --- the cold dictates of prudence, gratitude, or filial duty, may ſometimes be miſtaken for the pleadings of the heart.---I would not boaſt---yet let me ſay, that I have neither age, perſon, or character,

to

to found diſlike on;---my fortune ſuch as few ladies could be charged with *indiſcretion* in the match.---O Julia! when *Love* receives ſuch countenance from *Prudence*, nice minds will be ſuſpicious of its *birth*.

Jul. I know not whither your inſinuations would tend:---as they ſeem preſſing to inſult me---I will ſpare you the regret of having done ſo.---I have given you no cauſe for this! [*Exit in Tears.*

Faulk. In Tears! ſtay, Julia: ſtay but for a moment.---The door is faſtened!---Julia!---my ſoul---but for one moment:---I hear her ſobbing!---'Sdeath! what a brute am I to uſe her thus! Yet ſtay.---Aye---ſhe is coming now:---how little reſolution there is in woman!---how a few ſoft words can turn them!---No, faith! ſhe is *not* coming either.---Why, Julia---my love---ſay but that you forgive me---come but tell me that---now, this is being *too* reſentful:---ſtay! ſhe *is* coming too---I thought ſhe would---no *ſteadineſs* in any thing! her going away muſt have been a meer trick then---ſhe ſha'n't ſee that I was hurt by it---I'll affect indifference---*(hums a tune: then liſtens)*---No---Z---ds! ſhe's *not* coming!---nor don't intend it, I ſuppoſe.---This is not *ſteadineſs*, but *obſtinacy!* Yet I deſerve it.---What, after ſo long an abſence, to quarrel with her tenderneſs!---'twas barbarous and unmanly!----I ſhould be aſhamed to ſee her now.---I'll wait till her juſt reſentment is abated---and when I diſtreſs her ſo again, may I loſe her for ever! and be linked inſtead to ſome antique virago, whoſe knawing paſſions, and long hoarded ſpleen, ſhall make me curſe my folly half the day, and all the night! [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Mrs.* Malaprop's *Lodgings.*

Mrs. Malaprop, *and Captain* Abſolute

Mrs. Mal. Your being Sir Anthony's ſon, Captain, would itſelf be a ſufficient accommodation;---but from the ingenuity of your appearance, I am convinced you deſerve the character here given of you.

Abſ. Permit me to ſay, Madam, that as I never yet have had the pleaſure of ſeeing Miſs Languiſh, my principal inducement in this affair at preſent, is the honour of being allied to Mrs. Malaprop; of whoſe intellectual

tellectual accompliſhments, elegant manners, and unaffected learning, no tongue is ſilent.

Mrs. Mal. Sir, you do me infinite honour!---I beg, Captain, you'll be ſeated.---*(Sits)*--Ah! few gentlemen, now a days, know how to value the ineffectual qualities in a woman! few think how a little knowlege becomes a gentlewoman! Men have no ſenſe now but for the worthleſs flower beauty!

Abſ. It is but too true indeed, Ma'am; --- yet I fear our ladies ſhould ſhare the blame---they think our admiration of *beauty* ſo great, that *knowledge* in *them* would be ſuperfluous. Thus, like garden trees, they ſeldom ſhew fruits, till time has robb'd them of the more ſpecious bloſſom.---Few, like Mrs. Malaprop and the Orange-tree, are rich in both at once!

Mrs. Mal. Sir--you overpower me with good-breeding.---He is the very Pine-apple of politeneſs! You are not ignorant, Captain, that this giddy girl has ſomehow contrived to fix her affections on a beggarly, ſtroling, eve's-dropping Enſign, whom none of us have ſeen, and nobody knows any thing of.

Abſ. O, I have heard the ſilly affair before.---I'm not at all prejudiced againſt her on *that* account.

Mrs. Mal. You are very good, and very conſiderate, Captain.---I am ſure I have done every thing in my power ſince I exploded the affair! long ago I laid my poſitive conjunction on her never to think on the fellow again;---I have ſince laid Sir Anthony's propoſition before her; but I'm ſorry to ſay ſhe ſeems reſolved to decline every particle that I enjoin her.

Abſ. It muſt be very diſtreſſing indeed, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. It gives me the hydroſtatics to ſuch a degree!—I thought ſhe had perſiſted from correſponding with him; but behold this very day, I have interceded another letter from the fellow! I believe I have it in my pocket.

Abſ. O the devil! my laſt note. [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Mal Aye, here it is.

Abſ. Aye, my note indeed! O the little traitreſs Lucy. [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Mal. There, perhaps you may know the writing. [*Gives him the letter.*

Abſ.

Abſ. I think I have ſeen the hand before — yes, I *certainly muſt* have ſeen this hand before: ——

Mrs. Mal. Nay, but read it, Captain.

Abſ. (Reads) "*My ſoul's idol, my ador'd Lydia!*" —— Very tender indeed!

Mrs. Mal. Tender! aye, and prophane too, o'my conſcience!

Abſ. "*I am exceſſively alarmed at the intelligence you* "*ſend me, the more ſo as my new rival*" ——

Mrs Mal. That's you, Sir.

"*has univerſally the character of being an accompliſhed* "*gentleman, and a man of honour.*" —— Well, that's handſome enough.

Mrs. Mal. O, the fellow had ſome deſign in writing ſo ——

Abſ. That he had, I'll anſwer for him, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. But go on, Sir — you'll ſee preſently.

Abſ. As for the old weather-beaten ſhe-dragon who guards you," —— Who can he mean by that?

Mrs. Mal. Me, Sir — *me* — he means *me* there — what do you think now? — but go on a little further.

Abſ. Impudent ſcoundrel! — "*It ſhall go hard but I* "*will elude her vigilance, as I am told that the ſame* "*ridiculous vanity, which makes her dreſs up her coarſe* "*features, and deck her dull chat with hard words* "*which ſhe don't underſtand* ——

Mrs. Mal. There, Sir! an attack upon my language! what do you think of that? an aſperſion upon my parts of ſpeech! was ever ſuch a brute! ſave if I reprehend any thing in this world, it is the uſe of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!

Abſ. He deſerves to be hang'd and quartered! let me ſee — "*ſame ridiculous vanity*" ——

Mrs. Mal. You need not read it again, Sir.

Abſ I beg pardon, Ma'am "*does alſo lay her open to* "*the groſſeſt deceptions from flattery and pretended admi-* "*ration*" — an impudent coxcomb! "*ſo that I have a* "*ſcheme to ſee you ſhortly with the old Harridan's conſent,* "*and even to make her a go-between in our interviews.*" —— Was ever ſuch aſſurance.

Mrs. Mal. Did you ever hear any thing like it? — he'll elude my vigilance, will he? — yes, yes! ha! ha! he's

very likely to enter theſe floors!—we'll try who can plot beſt!

Abſ. Ha, ha, ha! a conceited puppy, ha, ha, ha! —Well, but Mrs. Malaprop, as the girl ſeems ſo infatuated by this fellow, ſuppoſe you were to wink at her correſponding with him for a little time — let her even plot an elopement with him — then do you connive at her eſcape while *I*, juſt in the nick, will have the fellow laid by the heels, and fairly contrive to carry her off in his ſtead.

Mrs. Mal. I am delighted with the ſcheme, never was any thing better perpetrated!

Abſ. But, pray, could not I ſee the lady for a few minutes now? — I ſhould like to try her temper a little.

Mrs. Mal. Why, I don't know—I doubt ſhe is not prepared for a firſt viſit of this kind.—There is a decorum in theſe matters.

Abſ. O Lord! ſhe won't mind *me*—only tell her Beverley———

Mr. Mal. Sir!—

Abſ. Gently, good tongue. (*Aſide.*

Mrs. Mal. What did you ſay of Beverley?

Abſ. O, I was going to propoſe that you ſhould tell her, by way of jeſt, that it was Beverley who was below—ſhe'd come down faſt enough then—ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mal. 'Twould be a trick ſhe well deſerves—beſides you know the fellow tells her he'll get my conſent to ſee her—ha, ha!—Let him if he can, I ſay again. —Lydia, come down here! [*Calling.*

—He'll make me a *go-between in their interviews!*—ha, ha, ha! Come down, I ſay Lydia!—I don't wonder at your laughing, ha, ha, ha! his impudence is truly ridiculous.

Abſ. 'Tis very ridiculous, upon my ſoul, Ma'am, ha, ha, ha!

Mrs. Mal. The little huſſy won't hear.—Well, I'll go and tell her at once who it is—ſhe ſhall know that Capt. Abſolute is come to wait on her. — And I'll make her behave as becomes a young woman.

Abſ. As you pleaſe, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. For the preſent, Captain, your ſervant—

Ah!

Ah! you've not done laughing yet, I ſee—*eluae my vigilance!* yes, yes, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit.*

Abſ. Ha, ha, ha one would think now that I might throw off all diſguiſe at once, and ſeize my prize with ſecurity—but ſuch is Lydia's caprice, that to undeceive her were probably to loſe her.---I'll ſee whether ſhe knows me

[*Walks aſide, and ſeems engaged in looking at the pictures.*

Enter Lydia.

Lyd. What a ſcene am I now to go thro'! ſurely nothing can be more dreadful than to be obliged to liſten to the loathſome addreſſes of a ſtranger to one's heart.---I have heard of girls perſecuted as I am, who have appealed in behalf of their favoured lover to the generoſity of his rival: ſuppoſe I were to try it---there ſtands the hated rival---an officer too!---but O how unlike my Beverley---I wonder he don't begin---truly he ſeems a very negligent wooer---quite at his eaſe, upon my word! I'll ſpeak firſt---Mr. Abſolute.

Abſ. Madam. [*Turns round.*

Lyd. O Heav'ns! Beverley!

Abſ. Huſh—huſh, my life!---ſoftly! be not ſurpriſed!

Lyd. I am ſo aſtoniſhed! and ſo terrified! and ſo overjoy'd!---for heav'n's ſake! how came you here?

Abſ. Briefly---I have deceived your Aunt---I was informed that my new rival was to viſit here this evening, and contriving to have him kept away, have paſſed myſelf on *her* for Capt. Abſolute.

Lyd. O, charming!---And ſhe really takes you for young Abſolute?

Abſ. O, ſhe's convinced of it.

Lyd. Ha, ha, ha! I can't forbear laughing to think how her ſagacity is over-reached!

Abſ. But we trifle with our precious moments---ſuch another opportunity may not occur- then let me now conjure my kind, my condeſcending angel, to fix the time when I may reſcue her from undeſerved perſecution, and with a licenſed warmth plead for my reward.

Lyd. Will you then, Beverley, conſent to forfeit that portion of my paltry wealth?---that burthen on the wings of love?

Abſ. O come to me---rich only thus---in lovelineſs

---Bring no portion to me but thy love---'twill be generous in you, Lydia-- for well you know, it is the only dower your poor Beverley can repay.

Lyd. How perſuaſive are his words—how charming will poverty be with him!

Abſ. Ah! my ſoul, what a life will we then live? Love ſhall be our idol and ſupport! we will worſhip him with a monaſtic ſtrictneſs; abjuring all worldly toys, to center every thought and action there.—Proud of calamity, we will enjoy the wreck of wealth; while the ſurrounding gloom of adverſity ſhall make the flame of our love ſhew doubly bright.—By Heav'ns! I would fling all goods of fortune from me with a prodigal hand to enjoy the ſcene where I might claſp my Lydia to my boſom, and ſay, the world affords no ſmile to me but here ——— [*Embracing her.*

If ſhe holds out now the devil is in it! [*Aſide.*

Lyd. Now could I fly with him to the Antipodes! but my perſecution is not yet come to a criſis.

Enter Mrs Malaprop, *liſtening.*

Mrs. Mal. I'm impatient to know how the little huzzy deports herſelf. [*Aſide.*

Abſ. So penſive, Lydia!—is then your warmth abated?

Mrs. Mal. Warmth abated!—ſo!—ſhe has been in a paſſion, I ſuppoſe.

Lyd. No—nor ever can while I have life.

Mrs. Mal. An ill temper'd little devil!—She'll be *in a paſſion all her life*—will ſhe?

Lyd. Think not the idle threats of my ridiculous aunt can ever have any weight with me.

Mrs. Mal. Very dutiful, upon my word.

Lyd. Let her choice be *Capt. Abſolute*, but Beverley is mine.

Mrs. Mal. I am aſtoniſhed at her aſſurance!—*to his face—this to his face!*

Abſ. Thus then let me enforce my ſuit. [*Kneeling.*

Mrs. Mal. Aye—poor young man!—down on his knees entreating for pity!—I can contain no longer—Why, huzzy, huzzy!—I have over-heard you.

Abſ. O confound her vigilance! [*Aſide.*

Mrs. Mal. Capt. Abſolute—I know not how to apologize for her ſhocking rudeneſs.

Abſ.

Abſ. So – all's ſafe, I find. [*Aſide.*
I have hopes, Madam, that time will bring the young lady ——

Mrs. Mal. O, there's nothing to be hoped for from her! ſhe's as headſtrong as an allegory on the banks of Nile.

Lyd. Nay, Madam, what do you charge me with now?

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou unbluſhing rebel—didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better? – didn't you ſay you never would be his?

Lyd. No, Madam---I did not.

Mrs. Mal. Good Heav'ns! what aſſurance!---Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying don't become a young woman!---Didn't you boaſt that Beverley---that ſtroler Beverley, poſſeſſed your heart?---Tell me that, I ſay.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Ma'am, and none but Beverley ——

Mrs. Mal. Hold;---hold Aſſurance!---you ſhall not be ſo rude.

Abſ. Nay, pray Mrs. Malaprop, don't ſtop the young lady's ſpeech: --- ſhe's very welcome to talk thus --- it does not hurt *me* in the leaſt, I aſſure you.

Mrs. Mal. You are *too* good, Captain---*too* amiably patient---but come with me, Miſs --- let us ſee you again ſoon, Captain-- remember what we have fixed.

Abſ. I ſhall, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Come, take a graceful leave of the gentleman.

Lyd. May every bleſſing wait on my Beverley, my lov'd Bev ——

Mrs. Mal. Huzzy! I'll choak the word in your throat. ---come along---come along. [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

[Beverley *kiſſing his hand to* Lydia---*Mrs.* Malaprop *ſtopping her from ſpeaking.*

SCENE V. Acres's *lodgings.*

Acres *and* David. Acres *as juſt dreſſed.*

Acres. Indeed, David---do you think I become it ſo?

Dav. You are quite another creature, believe me Maſter, by the Maſs! an' we've any luck we ſhall ſee the Devon monkeyroney in all the print-ſhops in Both!

Acres. Dreſs *does* make a difference, David.

Dav. 'Tis all in all, I think---difference! why, an' you were to go to Clod-Hall, I am certain the old lady wouldn't know you: Master Butler wouldn't believe his own eyes, and Mrs. Pickle would cry, "Lard preſarve me!" our dairy-maid would come giggling to the door, and I warrant Dolly Teſter, your Honour's favourite, would bluſh like my waiſtcoat---Oons! I'll hold a gallon, there an't a dog in the houſe but would bark, and I queſtion whether *Phillis* would wag a hair of her tail!

Acres. Aye, David, there's nothing like *poliſhing*.

Dav. So I ſays of your Honour's boots; but the boy never heeds me!

Acres. But, David, has Mr. De-la-Grace been here? I muſt rub up my balancing, and chaſing, and boring.

Dav. I'll call again, Sir.

Acres. Do---and ſee if there are any letters for me at the poſt-office.

Dav. I will---By the Maſs, I can't help looking at your head---if I hadn't been by at the cooking, I wiſh I may die if I ſhould have known the diſh again myſelf! [*Exit.*

Acres *comes forward, practiſing a dancing ſtep.*

Acres. Sink, riſe---coopee---Confound the firſt inventors of cotillons! ſay I---they are as bad as algebra to us country gentlemen---I can walk a Minuet eaſy enough when I'm forced!---and I have been accounted a good ſtick in a Country-dance.---Odd's jigs and tabors!---I never valued your croſs-over two couple---figure in---right and left---and I'd foot it with e'er a captain in the country!---but theſe outlandiſh heathen Allemandes and Cotillons are quite beyond me!---I ſhall never proſper at 'em, that's ſure---mine are true-born Engliſh legs---they don't underſtand their curſt French lingo!---their *Pas* this, and *Pas* that, and *Pas* t'other!---d---n me, my feet don't like to be called Paws! no, 'tis certain I have moſt Antigallican Toes!

Enter Servant.

Serv. Here is Sir Lucius O'Trigger to wait on you, Sir.

Acres. Shew him in.

Enter Sir Lucius.

Sir. Luc. Mr. Acres, I am delighted to embrace you.

Acres.

Acres. My dear Sir Lucius, I kiſs your hands.

Sir Luc. Pray, my friend, what has brought you ſo ſuddenly to Bath?

Acres. Faith! I have followed Cupid's Jack-a-Lantern, and find myſelf in a quagmire at laſt. — In ſhort, I have been very ill-uſed, Sir Lucius.—I don't chooſe to mention names, but look on me as on a very ill-uſed gentleman.

Sir Luc. Pray, what is the caſe?—I aſk no names.

Acres. Mark me, Sir Lucius, I falls as deep as need be in love with a young lady—her friends take my part —I follow her to Bath—ſend word of my arrival; and receive anſwer, that the lady is to be otherwiſe diſpoſed of.—This, Sir Lucius, I call being ill-uſed.

Sir Luc. Very ill, upon my conſcience—Pray, can you divine the cauſe of it?

Acres. Why, there's the matter: ſhe has another lover, *one* Beverley, who, I am told, is now in Bath.— Odds ſlanders and lies! he muſt be at the bottom of it.

Sir Luc. A rival in the caſe, is there? — and you think he has ſupplanted you unfairly.

Acres. Unfairly! — to be ſure he has. — He never could have done it fairly.

Sir Luc. Then ſure you know what is to be done!

Acres. Not I, upon my ſoul!

Sir Luc. We wear no ſwords here, but you underſtand me.

Acres. What! fight him!

Sir Luc. Aye, to be ſure: what can I mean elſe?

Acres. But he has given me no provocation.

Sir Luc. Now, I think he has given you the greateſt provocation in the world.—Can a man commit a more heinous offence againſt another than to fall in love with the ſame woman? O, by my ſoul, it is the moſt unpardonable breach of friendſhip!

Acres. Breach of *friendſhip!* Aye, aye; but I have no acquaintance with this man. I never ſaw him in my life.

Sir Luc. That's no argument at all— he has the leſs right then to take ſuch a liberty.

Acres. 'Gad that's true, — I grow full of anger, Sir Lucius! — I fire apace! Odds hilts and blades! I find

a man may have a deal of valour in him, and not know it! But couldn't I contrive to have a little right of my ſide?

Sir Luc. What the d——l ſignifies *right*, when your *honour* is concerned? Do you think *Achilles*, or my little *Alexander the Great* ever inquired where the right lay? No, by my ſoul, they drew their broad-ſwords, and left the lazy ſons of peace to ſettle the juſtice of it.

Acres. Your words are a grenadier's march to my heart! I believe courage muſt be catching!—I certainly do feel a kind of valour riſing as it were—a kind of courage, as I may ſay—Odds flints, pans, and triggers! I'll challenge him directly.

Sir Luc. Ah, my little friend! if we had *Blunderbuſs-Hall* here—I could ſhew you a range of anceſtry, in the O'Trigger line, that would furniſh the new room; every one of whom had killed his man!—For though the manſion-houſe and dirty acres have ſlipt through my fingers, I thank God our honour, and the family-pictures, are as freſh as ever.

Acres. O Sir Lucius! I have had anceſtors too! every man of 'em colonel or captain in the militia?—Odds balls and barrels! ſay no more—I'm braced for it—my nerves are become catgut! My ſinews wire! and my heart pinchbeck! The thunder of your words has ſoured the milk of human kindneſs in my breaſt! —Z—ds! as the man in the play ſays, "I could do ſuch deeds!"

Sir Luc. Come, come, there muſt be no paſſion at all in the caſe—theſe things ſhould always be done civilly.

Acres. I muſt be in a paſſion, Sir Lucius—I muſt be in a rage—Dear Sir Lucius let me be in a rage, if you love me.—Come, here's pen and paper. *(Sits down to write)* I would the ink were red!—indite, I ſay, indite!—How ſhall I begin? Odds bullets and blades! I'll write a good *bold hand*, however.

Sir Luc. Pray compoſe yourſelf.

Acres. Come, now ſhall I begin with an oath? Do, Sir Lucius, let me begin with a damme.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! do the thing *decently* and like a Chriſtian. Begin now,—"*Sir*——

Acres. That's too civil by the half.

Sir Luc.

Sir Luc. "*To prevent the confuſion that might ariſe.*"

Acres. Well——

Sir Luc. "*From our both addreſſing the ſame lady.*"

Acres. Aye — there's the reaſon — "*ſame lady*" —— Well——

Sir Luc. "*I ſhall expect the honour of your company*"——

Acres. Z——ds! I'm not aſking him to dinner.

Sir Luc. Pray be eaſy.

Acres. Well then, "honour of your company"

Sir Luc. *To ſettle our pretenſions.*"

Acres. Well.

Sir Luc. Let me ſee, aye, *King's Mead-fields* will do ——"*In King's Mead-fields.*"

Acres. So that's done.—Well, I'll fold it up preſently; my own creſt—a hand and dagger ſhall be the ſeal.

Sir Luc. You ſee now this little explanation will put a ſtop at once to all confuſion or miſunderſtanding that might ariſe between you.

Acres. Aye, we fight to prevent any miſunderſtanding.

Sir Luc. Now, I'll leave you to fix your own time. —Take my advice, and you'll decide it this evening if you can; then let the worſt come of it, 'twill be off your mind to-morrow.

Acres. Very true.

Sir Luc. So I ſhall ſee nothing more of you, unleſs it be by letter, till evening. — I would do myſelf the honour to carry your meſſage; but, to tell you a ſecret, I believe I ſhall have juſt ſuch another affair on my hands. There is a gay captain here, who put a jeſt on me lately, at the expence of my country, and I only want to fall in with the gentleman, to call him out.

Acres. By my valour, I ſhould like to ſee you fight firſt! Odds life! I ſhould like to ſee you kill him, if it was only to get a little leſſon.

Sir Luc. I ſhall be very proud of inſtructing you. —Well for the preſent—but remember now, when you meet your antagoniſt, do every thing in a mild and agreeable manner. — Let your courage be as keen, but at the ſame time as poliſhed as your ſword.

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Acres's *Lodgings.* Acres *and* David.

David. THEN, by the Maſs, Sir! I would do no ſuch thing ----- ne'er a Sir Lucius O'Trigger in the kingdom ſhould make me fight, when I wa'n't ſo minded. Oons! what will the old lady ſay, when ſhe hears o't!

Acres. Ah! David, if you had heard Sir Lucius! --- Odds ſparks and flames! he would have rous'd your valour.

David. Not he, indeed. I hates ſuch blood-thirſty cormorants. Look'ee, Maſter, if you'd wanted a bout at boxing, quarter-ſtaff, or ſhort-ſtaff, I ſhould never be the man to bid you cry off: But for your curſt ſharps and ſnaps, I never knew any good come of 'em.

Acres. But my *honour*, David, my *honour!* I muſt be very careful of my honour.

David. Aye, by the Maſs! and I would be very careful of it; and I think in return my *honour* couldn't do leſs than to be very careful of *me.*

Acres Odds blades! David, no gentleman will ever riſk the loſs of his honour!

David. I ſay then, it would be but civil in *honour* never to riſk the loſs of the *gentleman.* --- Lookee, Maſter, this *honour* ſeems to me to be a marvellous falſe friend; aye, truly, a very courtier-like ſervant. --- Put the caſe, I was a gentleman (which, thank God, no one can ſay of me); well --- my honour makes me quarrel with another gentleman of my acquaintance. --- So --- we fight. (Pleaſant enough that) Boh! --- I kill him --- (the more's my luck.) Now, pray who gets the profit of it? --- Why, my *honour.* --- But put the caſe that he kills me! --- by the Maſs! I go to the worms, and my honour whips over to my enemy!

Acres. No, David --- in that caſe! --- Odds crowns and laurels! your honour follows you to the grave.

David. Now, that's juſt the place where I could make a ſhift to do without it.

Acres. Z---ds, David! you're a coward --- It doesn't become my valour to liſten to you. --- What, I ſhall diſgrace

diſgrace my anceſtors! -- Think of that, David --- think what it would be to diſgrace my anceſtors!

David. Under favour, the ſureſt way of not diſgracing them, is to keep as long as you can out of their company. Look'ee now, Maſter, to go to them in ſuch haſte --- with an ounce of lead in your brains --- I ſhould think might as well be let alone. Our anceſtors are very good kind of folks; but they are the laſt people I ſhould chooſe to have a viſiting acquaintance with.

Acres. But David, now, you don't think there is ſuch very, very, *very* great danger, hey? --- Odds life! people often fight without any miſchief done!

David. By the Maſs, I think 'tis ten to one againſt you! --- Oons! here to meet ſome lion-headed fellow, I warrant, with his d---n'd double-barrell'd ſwords, and cut and thruſt piſtols! Lord bleſs us! it makes me tremble to think o't! --- Thoſe be ſuch deſperate bloody-minded weapons! Well, I never could abide them; from a child I never could fancy 'em! --- I ſuppoſe there a'n't ſo mercileſs a beaſt in the world as your loaded piſtol!

Acres. Z---ds! I *won't* be afraid --- Odds fire and fury! you ſhan't make me afraid. --- Here is the challenge, and I have ſent for my dear friend Jack Abſolute to carry it for me.

David. Aye. In the name of miſchief, let *him* be the meſſenger. --- For my part, I wouldn't lend a hand to it for the beſt horſe in your ſtable. By the Maſs, it don't look like another letter --- It is, as I may ſay, a deſigning and malicious-looking letter --- and I warrant ſmells of gunpowder like a ſoldier's pouch --- Oons! I wouldn't ſwear it mayn't go off!

Acres. Out, you poltroon! --- you ha'n't the valour of a graſs-hopper.

David. Well, I ſay no more --- 'twill be ſad news, to be ſure, at Clod-Hall --- but I ha' done. --- How Phyllis will howl when ſhe hears of it! --- Aye, poor bitch, ſhe little thinks what ſhooting her Maſter's going after! --- And warrant old Crop, who has carried your honour, field and road, theſe ten years, will curſe the hour he was born. *(Whimpering.)*

Acres. It won't do, David --- I am determined to fight

fight — ſo get along, you Coward, while I'm in the mind.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Captain Abſolute, Sir.

Acres. O! ſhew him up. [*Exit* Servant.

David. Well, Heaven ſend we be all alive this time to-morrow.

Acres. What's that! --- Don't provoke me, David.

David. Good bye, Maſter, *(Whimpering.)*

Acres. Get along, you cowardly, daſtardly, croaking raven. [*Exit* David.

Enter Abſolute.

Abſ. What's the matter, Bob?

Acres. A vile, ſheep-hearted blockhead! --- If I hadn't the valour of St. George and the dragon to boot ———

Abſ. But what did you want with me, Bob?

Acres. O! --- There —— *(Gives him the challenge.)*

Abſ. "*To Enſign Beverley.*" So — what's going on now! [*Aſide.*

Well, what's this?

Acres. A challenge!

Abſ. Indeed! - - Why, you won't fight him; will you, Bob?

Acres. 'Egad but I will, Jack. - - Sir Lucius has wrought me to it He has left me full of rage - - and I'll fight this evening, that ſo much good paſſion mayn't be waſted

Abſ But what have I to do with this?

Acres. Why, as I think you know ſomething of this fellow, I want you to find him out for me, and give him this mortal *defiance*.

Abſ. Well, give it to me, and truſt me he gets it.

Acres. Thank you, my dear friend, my dear Jack; but it is giving you a great deal of trouble.

Abſ. Not in the leaſt --- I beg you won't mention it --- No trouble in the world, I aſſure you.

Acres. You are very kind --- What it is to have a friend! --- You couldn't be my ſecond --- could you, Jack?

Abſ Why no, Bob --- not in *this* affair --- it would not be quite ſo proper.

Acres.

Acres. Well then I muſt fix on my friend Sir Lucius. I ſhall have your good wiſhes, however, Jack.

Abſ. Whenever he meets you, believe me.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony Abſolute is below, inquiring for the Captain.

Abſ. I'll come inſtantly. — Well, my little hero, ſucceſs attend you. *(Going.)*

Acres Stay — ſtay, Jack. — If Beverley ſhould aſk you what kind of a man your friend Acres is, do, tell him I am a devil of a fellow — will you, Jack?

Abſ. To be ſure I ſhall. — I'll ſay you are a determined dog — hey, Bob!

Acres. Aye, do, do — and if that frightens him, 'egad perhaps he mayn't come. So tell him I generally kill a man a week; will you, Jack!

Abſ. I will, I will; I'll ſay you are call'd in the country "*Fighting Bob!*"

Acres. Right, right — 'tis all to prevent miſchief; for I don't want to take his life if I clear my honour.

Abſ. No! — that's very kind of you.

Acres. Why, you don't wiſh me to kill him — do you, Jack?

Abſ. No, upon my ſoul, I do not. — But a devil of a fellow, hey? *(Going.)*

Acres. True, true — but ſtay — ſtay, Jack — you may add that you never ſaw me in ſuch a rage before — a moſt devouring rage!

Abſ. I will, I will.

Acres. Remember, Jack — a determined dog!

Abſ. Aye, aye, "*Fighting Bob!*" [*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE II. *Mrs.* Malaprop's *Lodgings.*

Mrs. Malaprop *and* Lydia.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou perverſe one! — tell me what you can object to him? — Isn't he a handſome man? — tell me that. — A genteel man? a pretty figure of a man?

Lyd. She little thinks whom ſhe is praiſing! *(aſide)* — So is Beverley, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. No capariſons, Miſs, if you pleaſe! — Capariſons don't become a young woman. — No! Captain Abſolute is indeed a fine gentleman!

Lyd.

Lyd. Aye, the Captain Abſolute *you* have ſeen.
[*Aſide.*

Mrs. Mal. Then he's *ſo* well bred; —*ſo* full of alacrity, and adulation! — and has *ſo much* to ſay for himſelf: --- in ſuch good language too! --- His phyſiognomy ſo grammatical! --- Then his preſence is ſo noble! --- I proteſt, when I ſaw him, I thought of what Hamlet ſays in the Play: --- "Heſperian curls! "--- the front of *Job* himſelf! --- an eye, like *March*, "to threaten at command! --- a Station, like Harry "Mercury, new ---" Something about kiſſing --- on a hill --- however, the ſimilitude ſtruck me directly.

Lyd. How enraged ſhe'll be preſently when ſhe diſcovers her miſtake! [*Aſide.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir Anthony, and Captain Abſolute are below, Ma'am.

Mrs. Mal. Shew them up here. [*Exit* Serv. Now, Lydia, I inſiſt on your behaving as becomes a young woman. --- Shew your good breeding at leaſt, though you have forgot your duty.

Lyd. Madam, I have told you my reſolution; --- I ſhall not only give him no encouragement, but I won't even ſpeak to, or look at him.

[*Flings herſelf into a chair, with her face from the door.*

Enter Sir Anthony *and* Abſolute.

Sir Anth. Here we are, Mrs. Malaprop; come to mitigate the frowns of unrelenting beauty --- and difficulty enough I had to bring this fellow. --- I don't know what's the matter; but if I hadn't held him by force, he'd have given me the ſlip.

Mrs. Mal. You have infinite trouble, Sir Anthony, in the affair. --- I am aſhamed for the cauſe. Lydia, Lydia, riſe I beſeech you --- pay your reſpects!
[*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. I hope, Madam, that Miſs Languiſh has reflected on the worth of this gentleman, and the regard due to her Aunt's choice, and *my* alliance. ——— Now, Jack, ſpeak to her! [*Aſide to him.*

Abſ. What the d---l ſhall I do! --- *(Aſide)* --- You ſee, Sir, ſhe won't even look at me, whilſt you are here.

here. --- I knew ſhe wouldn't --- I told you ſo --- Let me intreat you, Sir, to leave us together

[Abſolute *ſeems to expoſtulate with his Father.*

Lyd. (aſide.) I wonder I ha'n't heard my Aunt exclaim yet! ſure ſhe can't have look'd at him! --- perhaps their regimentals are alike, and ſhe is ſomething blind.

Sir Anth. I ſay, Sir, I won't ſtir a foot yet.

Mrs. Mal. I am ſorry to ſay, Sir Anthony, that my affluence over my Niece is very ſmall. --- Turn round Lydia, I bluſh for you. [*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. May I not flatter myſelf that Miſs Languiſh will aſſign what cauſe of diſlike ſhe can have to my ſon! — Why don't you begin, Jack? — Speak, you puppy — ſpeak! [*Aſide to him.*

Mrs. Mal. It is impoſſible, Sir Anthony, ſhe can have any. — She will not *ſay* ſhe has. —— Anſwer, huſſy! why don't you anſwer? [*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. Then, Madam, I truſt that a childiſh and haſty predilection will be no bar to Jack's happineſs. — Z—ds! ſirrah! why don't you ſpeak? [*Aſide to him.*

Lyd. (aſide) I think my lover ſeems as little inclined to converſation as myſelf. — How ſtrangely blind my Aunt is!

Abſ. Hem! hem! — Madam — hem! (Abſolute *attempts to ſpeak, then returns to Sir* Anthony) — Faith! Sir, I am ſo confounded! — and ſo--ſo--confuſed! — I told you I ſhould be ſo, Sir, — I knew it. — The-the- tremor of my paſſion, entirely takes away my preſence of mind.

Sir Anth. But it don't take away your voice, fool, does it? — Go up, and ſpeak to her directly!

[Abſ. *makes ſigns to Mrs.* Mal. *to leave them together.*]

Mrs Mal. Sir Anthony, ſhall we leave them together? — Ah! you ſtubborn, little vixen! [*Aſide to her.*

Sir Anth. Not yet, Ma'am, not yet! — what the d—l are you at? unlock your jaws, ſirrah, or —— [*Aſide to him.*

[Abſolute *draws near* Lydia.]

Abſ. Now Heav'n ſend ſhe may be too ſullen to look round!

round! — I muſt diſguiſe my voice — *(Aſide)* ——— [*Speaks in a low hoarſe tone.*

—— Will not Miſs Languiſh lend an ear to the mild accents of true love? —— Will not ———

Sir Anth. What the d—l ails the fellow? —— Why don't you ſpeak out? --- not ſtand croaking like a frog in a quinſey.

Abſ. The-the--exceſs of my awe, and my--my--my modeſty, quite choak me!

Sir Anth. Ah! your *modeſty* again! --- I'll tell you what, Jack; if you don't ſpeak out directly, and glibly too, I ſhall be in ſuch a rage! --- Mrs. Malaprop, I wiſh the lady would favour us with ſomething more than a ſide-front! [*Mrs.* Malaprop *ſeems to chide* Lydia.

Abſ. So! --- all will out I ſee! [*Goes up to* Lydia, *ſpeaks ſoftly.*

Be not ſurpriſed, my Lydia, ſuppreſs all ſurpriſe at preſent.

Lyd. (aſide) Heav'ns! 'tis Beverley's voice! ——— Sure he can't have impos'd on Sir Anthony too! --- [*Looks round by degrees, then ſtarts up.*

Is this poſſible! --- my Beverley! --- how can this be? --- my Beverley?

Abſ. Ah! 'tis all over. [*Aſide.*

Sir Anth. Beverley! --- the devil --- Beverley! --- What can the girl mean? --- This is my ſon, Jack Abſolute!

Mrs. Mal. For ſhame, huſſy! for ſhame! --- your head runs ſo on that fellow, that you have him always in your eyes! --- beg Captain Abſolute's pardon directly.

Lyd. I ſee no Captain Abſolute, but my lov'd Beverley!

Sir Anth. Z---ds! the girl's mad! --- her brain's turn'd by reading!

Mrs. Mal. O' my conſcience, I believe ſo. --- What do you mean by Beverley, huſſy? — You ſaw Captain Abſolute before to-day; there he is — your huſband that ſhall be.

Lyd. With all my ſoul, Ma'am — when I refuſe my Beverley ———

Sir Anth. O! ſhe's as mad as Bedlam! — or has this fellow

fellow been playing us a rogue's trick! — Come here, ſirrah who the d—l are you?

Abſ. Faith, Sir, I am not quite clear myſelf; but I'll endeavour to recollect.

Sir Anth. Are you my ſon, or not? — anſwer for your mother, you dog, if you won't for me.

Mrs. Mal. Aye, Sir, who are you? O mercy! I begin to ſuſpect! —

Abſ. Ye Powers of Impudence befriend me! *(aſide)* Sir Anthony, moſt aſſuredly I am your wife's ſon; and that I ſincerely believe myſelf to be *your's* alſo, I hope my duty has always ſhewn. — Mrs. Malaprop, I am your moſt reſpectful admirer — and ſhall be proud to add *affectionate nephew.* — I need not tell my Lydia, that ſhe ſees her faithful Beverley, who, knowing the ſingular generoſity of her temper, aſſumed that name, and a ſtation, which has proved a teſt of the moſt diſintereſted love, which he now hopes to enjoy in a more elevated character.

Lyd. So! — there will be no elopement after all! *(ſullenly.)*

Sir Anth. Upon my ſoul, Jack, thou art a very impudent fellow! to do you juſtice, I think I never ſaw a piece of more conſummate aſſurance.

Abſ. O, you flatter me, Sir, — you compliment — 'tis my *modeſty* you know, Sir — my *modeſty* that has ſtood in my way.

Sir Anth. Well, I am glad you are not the dull, inſenſible varlet you pretended to be, however! —— I'm glad you have made a fool of your father, you dog — I am. ——— So this was your *penitence*, your *duty*, and *obedience!* — I thought it was d—n'd ſudden! — You *never heard their names before*, not you! --- *What, Languiſhes of Worceſterſhire*, hey? *if you could pleaſe me in the affair, 'twas all you deſired!* --- Ah! you diſſembling villain! --- What! *(pointing to* Lydia) *ſhe ſquints, don't ſhe? --- a little red-hair'd girl!* --- hey? --- Why, you hypocritical young raſcal --- I wonder you a'n't aſham'd to hold up your head!

Abſ. 'Tis with difficulty, Sir --- I *am* confus'd --- very much confus'd, as you muſt perceive.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony! --- a new light breaks

breaks in upon me! --- hey! how! what! Captain, did *you* write the letters then? --- What! --- I am to thank *you* for the elegant compilation of '*an old weather-beaten ſhe-dragon*' --- hey? --- O mercy! --- was it *you* that reflected on my parts of ſpeech?

Abſ. Dear Sir! my modeſty will be overpower'd at laſt, if you don't aſſiſt me. --- I ſhall certainly not be able to ſtand it!

Sir Anth. Come, come, Mrs. Malaprop, we muſt forget and forgive; --- odds'life! matters have taken ſo clever a turn all of a ſudden, that I could find in my heart, to be ſo good-humour'd! and ſo gallant! --- hey! Mrs. Malaprop!

Mrs. Mal. Well, Sir Anthony, ſince you deſire it, we will not anticipate the paſt; --- ſo mind young people --- our retroſpection will now be all to the future.

Sir Anth. Come, we muſt leave them together; Mrs. Malaprop, they long to fly into each other's arms, I warrant! --- Jack --- is'n't the *cheek* as I ſaid, hey? --- and the eye, you dog! --- and the lip --- hey? Come, Mrs. Malaprop, we'll not diſturb their tenderneſs --- their's is the time of life for happineſs! ——— "*Youth's the ſeaſon made for joy*" --- (ſings) --- hey! --- Odds'life! I'm in ſuch ſpirits, --- I don't know what I couldn't do! --- Permit me, Ma'am --- (*gives his hand to Mrs.* Mal.) (*ſings*) Tol-de-rol --- 'gad I ſhould like a little fooling myſelf --- Tol-de-rol! de-rol!

[*Exit ſinging, and handing Mrs.* Mal.

(Lydia *ſits ſullenly in her chair.*)

Abſ. So much thought bodes me no good (*aſide*) --- So grave, Lydia!

Lyd. Sir!

Abſ. So! --- egad! I thought as much! --- that d---n'd monoſyllable has froze me! (*aſide*) --- What, Lydia, now that we are as happy in our *friends conſent*, as in our *mutual vows* ———

Lyd. Friends conſent, indeed! (*peeviſhly*)

Alſ. Come, come, we muſt lay aſide ſome of our romance --- a little *wealth* and *comfort* may be endur'd after all. And for your fortune, the lawyers ſhall make ſuch ſettlements as ———

Lyd.

Lyd. Lawyers! I *hate* lawyers.

Abſ. Nay then, we will not wait for lingering forms, but inſtantly procure the licence, and ———

Lyd. The *licence!* --- I *hate* licence.

Abſ. O my Love! *be* not ſo unkind --- thus let me intreat ——— [*Kneeling.*

Lyd. Pſhaw! --- what ſignifies kneeling, when you know I *muſt* have you?

Abſ. (*riſing*) Nay, Madam, there ſhall be no conſtraint upon your inclinations, I promiſe you. — If I have loſt your *heart*, — I reſign the reſt. — 'Gad, I muſt try what a little *ſpirit* will do. [*aſide.*

Lyd. (*riſing*) Then, Sir, let me tell you, the intereſt you had there was acquired by a mean, unmanly impoſition, and deſerves the puniſhment of fraud. — What, you have been treating *me* like a *child!* —— humouring my romance! and laughing, I ſuppoſe, at your ſucceſs!

Abſ. You wrong me, Lydia, you wrong me — only hear ———

Lyd. So, while *I* fondly imagined we were deceiving my relations, and flatter'd myſelf that I ſhould outwit and incenſe them *all* — behold! my hopes are to be cruſh'd at once, by my Aunt's conſent and approbation! — and *I* am *myſelf*, the only dupe at laſt!

[*Walking about in heat.*

Abſ. Nay, but hear me ———

Lyd. No, Sir, you could not think that ſuch paltry artifices could pleaſe me, when the maſk was thrown off! — But I ſuppoſe ſince your tricks have made you ſecure of my *fortune*, you are little ſolicitous about my *affections*. — But here, Sir, here is the picture ——— Beverley's picture! (*taking a miniature from her bojom*) which I have worn, night and day, in ſpite of threats and entreaties! — There, Sir, (*flings it to him*) and be aſſured I throw the original from my heart as eaſily!

Abſ. Nay, nay, Ma'am, we will not differ as to that. — Here, (*taking out a picture*) *here* is Miſs Lydia Languiſh. — What a difference! — aye, *there* is the heav'nly aſſenting ſmile, that firſt gave ſoul and ſpirit to my hopes! — thoſe are the lips which ſeal'd a vow, as yet ſcarce dry in Cupid's calendar! — and *there* the

the *half* reſentful bluſh, that *would* have check'd the ardour of my thanks — Well, all that's paſt! — all over indeed! — There, Madam --- in *beauty*, that copy is not equal to you, but in my mind it's merit over the original, in being ſtill the ſame, is ſuch --- that --- I cannot find in my heart to *part with* it.

[*Puts it up again.*

Lyd. (*Softening*) 'Tis *your own* doing, Sir --- I, I, I ſuppoſe you are perfectly ſatisfied.

Abſ. O, moſt certainly --- ſure now this is much better than being in love! --- ha! ha! ha! --- there's ſome ſpirit in *this!* --- What ſignifies breaking ſome ſcores of ſolemn promiſes, half an hundred vows, under one's hand, with the marks of a dozen or two angels to witneſs --- all that's of no conſequence you know. --- To be ſure people will ſay, that Miſs didn't know her own mind --- but never mind that: --- or perhaps they may be ill-natured enough to hint, that the gentleman grew tired of the lady and forſook her --- but don't let that fret you.

Lyd. There's no bearing his inſolence.

[*Burſts into tears.*

Enter Mrs. Malaprop *and Sir* Anthony.

Mrs. Mal. (*Entering*) Come, we muſt interrupt your billing and cooing a while.

Lyd. This is *worſe* than your treachery and deceit, you baſe ingrate! [*Sobbing.*

Sir Anth. What the devil's the matter now! --- Z---ds! Mrs. Malaprop, this is the *idleſt billing* and *cooing* I ever heard! — but what the deuce is the meaning of it? — I'm quite aſtoniſh'd!

Abſ. Aſk the lady, Sir.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy! --- I'm quite analys'd for my part! --- why, Lydia, what is the reaſon of this?

Lyd. Aſk the *gentleman*, Ma'am.

Sir Anth. Z---ds! I ſhall be in a phrenzy! --- why Jack, you ſcoundrel, you are not come out to be any one elſe, are you?

Mrs. Mal. Aye, Sir, there's no more *trick*, is there? --- you are not like Cerberus, *three* Gentlemen at once, are you?

Abſ.

Abſ. You'll not let me ſpeak---I ſay the *lady* can account for *this* much better than I can.

Lyd. Ma'am, you once commanded me never to think of Beverley again—*there* is the man—I now obey you: —for, from this moment, I renounce him for ever.

[*Exit* Lydia.

Mrs. Mal. O mercy! and miracles! what a turn here is—why ſure, Captain, you haven't behaved diſreſpectfully to my Niece.

Sir Anth. Ha, ha, ha,—ha, ha, ha!—now I ſee it—Ha, ha, ha!—now I ſee it—you have been too lively, Jack.

Abſ. Nay, Sir, upon my word———

Sir Anth. Come, no lying, Jack—I'm ſure *'twas* ſo.

Mrs. Mal. O Lud! Sir Anthony!———O fie, Captain!

Abſ. Upon my ſoul, Ma'am ———

Sir Anth. Come, no excuſe, Jack;—why, your father you rogue, was ſo before you:—the blood of the Abſolutes was always impatient.—Ha, ha, ha! poor little Lydia!—why, you've frighten'd her, you Dog, you have.

Abſ. By all that's good, Sir———

Sir Anth. Z——ds! ſay no more, I tell you.——Mrs. Malaprop ſhall make your peace.—You muſt make his peace, Mrs. Malaprop;—you muſt tell her 'tis Jack's way—tell her 'tis all our ways—it runs in the blood of our family!—Come, get on, Jack,—ha, ha, ha! Mrs. Malaprop—a young villain!

[*Puſhing him out.*

Mrs. Mal. O! Sir Anthony!——O fie, Captain!

[*Exeunt ſeverally.*

SCENE IV. *The* North-Parade.

Enter Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Sir Luc. I wonder where this Capt. Abſolute hides himſelf---Upon my conſcience!---theſe officers are always in one's way in love-affairs:---I remember I might have married Lady Dorothy Carmine, if it had not been for a little rogue of a Major, who ran away with her before ſhe could get a ſight of me!——And I wonder too what it is the ladies can ſee in them to be ſo fond of them---unleſs it be a touch of the old

ſerpent

ſerpent in 'em, that makes the little creatures be caught, like vipers with a bit of red cloth---Hah!---isn't this the Captain coming?---faith it is!---There is a probability of ſucceeding about that fellow, that is mighty provoking!---Who the devil is he talking to?

[*Steps aſide.*

Enter Capt Abſolute.

Abſ. To what fine purpoſe I have been plotting! a noble reward for all my ſchemes, upon my ſoul!——a little gypſey!---I did not think her romance could have made her ſo d——n'd abſurd either---S'death, I never was in a worſe humour in my life.--- I could cut my own throat, or any other perſon's, with the greateſt pleaſure in the world!

Sir Luc. O, faith! I'm in the luck of it---I never could have found him in a ſweeter temper for my purpoſe---to be ſure I'm juſt come in the nick! now to enter into converſation with him, and ſo quarrel genteelly. [Sir Lucius *goes up to* Abſolute.——With regard to that matter, Captain, I muſt beg leave to differ in opinion with you.

Abſ. Upon my word then, you muſt be a very ſubtle diſputant:---becauſe, Sir, I happen'd juſt then to be giving no opinion at all.

Sir Luc. That's no reaſon.---For give me leave to tell you, a man may *think* an untruth as well as *ſpeak* one.

Abſ. Very true, Sir, but if the man never utters his thoughts, I ſhould think they *might* ſtand a *chance* of eſcaping controverſy.

Sir Luc. Then, Sir, you differ in opinion with me, which amounts to the ſame thing.

Abſ. Hark'ee, Sir Lucius,---if I had not before known you to be a gentleman, upon my ſoul, I ſhould not have diſcovered it at this interview:---for what you can drive at, unleſs you mean to quarrel with me, I cannot conceive!

Sir Luc. I humbly thank you, Sir, for the quickneſs of your apprehenſion. [*Bowing*]---you have nam'd the very thing I would be at.

Abſ. Very well, Sir---I ſhall certainly not baulk your inclinations:——but I ſhould be glad you would pleaſe to explain your motives.

Sir

Sir Luc. Pray Sir, be eaſy---the quarrel is a very pretty quarrel as it ſtands---we ſhould only ſpoil it, by trying to explain it.---However, your memory is very ſhort---or you could not have forgot an affront you paſſed on me within this week.---So no more, but name your time and place.

Abſ. Well, Sir, ſince you are ſo bent on it, the ſooner the better; --let it be this evening---here by the Spring-Gardens.---We ſhall ſcarcely be interrupted.

Sir Luc. Faith! the ſame interruption in affairs of this nature ſhews very great ill-breeding.——I don't know what's the reaſon, but in England, if a thing of this kind gets wind, people make ſuch a pother, that a gentleman can never fight in peace and quietneſs.---However, if it's the ſame to you, Captain, I ſhould take it as a particular kindneſs, if you'd let us meet in King's-Mead-Fields, as a little buſineſs will call me there about ſix o'clock, and I may diſpatch both matters at once.

Abſ. 'Tis the ſame to me exactly.---A little after ſix, then we will diſcuſs this matter more ſeriouſly.

Sir Luc. If you pleaſe, Sir, there will be very pretty ſmall-ſword light, tho' it won't do for a long ſhot.—— So that matter's ſettled, and my mind's at eaſe.

[*Exit.* Sir Lucius.

Enter Faulkland, *meeting* Abſolute.

Abſ. Well met.---I was going to look for you.—— O, Faulkland! all the Dæmons of ſpite and diſappointment have conſpired againſt me! I'm ſo vex'd, that if I had not the proſpect of a reſource in being knock'd o'the head by and bye, I ſhould ſcarce have ſpirits to tell you the cauſe.

Faulk. What can you mean?——Has Lydia chang'd her mind?---I ſhould have thought her duty and inclination would now have pointed to the ſame object.

Abſ. Aye, juſt as the eyes do of a perſon who ſquints:--when her *love-eye* was fix'd on *me*—— t'other---her *eye* of *duty*, was finely obliqued---but when duty bid her point *that* the ſame way---off t'other turn'd on a ſwivel, and ſecured his retreat with a frown!

Faulk. But what's the reſource you——

Abſ.

Abſ. O, to wind up the whole, a good natur'd Iriſhman here has (*mimicking* Sir Lucius) begg'd leave to have the pleaſure of cutting my throat——and I mean to indulge him---that's all.

Faulk. Prithee, be ſerious.

Abſ. 'Tis fact, upon my ſoul.---Sir Lucius O'Trigger---you know him by ſight---for ſome affront, which I am ſure I never intended, has obliged me to meet him this evening at ſix o'clock :---'tis on that account I wiſh'd to ſee you---you muſt go with me.

Faulk. Nay, there muſt be ſome miſtake, ſure.---- Sir Lucius ſhall explain himſelf---and I dare ſay matters may be accommodated :---but this evening, did you ſay ?---I wiſh it had been any other time.

Abſ. Why ? there will be light enough :——there will (as Sir Lucius ſays) " be very pretty ſmall-ſword light, tho' it won't do for a long ſhot."---Confound his long ſhots!

Faulk. But I am myſelf a good deal ruffled, by a difference I have had with Julia---my vile tormenting temper has made me treat her ſo cruelly, that I ſhall not be myſelf till we are reconciled.

Abſ. By Heav'ns, Faulkland, you don't deſerve her.

Enter Servant, gives Faulkland *a letter.*

Faulk. O Jack ! this is from Julia---I dread to open it---I fear it may be to take a laſt leave---perhaps to bid me return her letters---and reſtore——O! how I ſuffer for my folly !

Abſ. Here---let me ſee.

[*Takes the letter and opens it.*

Aye, a final ſentence indeed !---'tis all over with you, faith !

Faulk. Nay, Jack---don't keep me in ſuſpence.

Abſ. Hear then.---*As* " *I am convinced that my* " *dear* Faulkland's *own reflections have already up-* " *braided him for his laſt unkindneſs to me, I will not* " *add a word on the ſubject.--- I wiſh to ſpeak with you* " *as ſoon as poſſible.---Your's ever and truly,* Julia."

---There's ſtubbornneſs and relentment for you !

[*Gives him the letter.*

Why, man, you don't ſeem one whit the happier at this.

Faulk.

Faulk. O, yes, I am,—but---but———

Abſ. Confound your *buts*.---You never hear any thing that would make another man bleſs himſelf, but you immediately d---n it with a *but*.

Faulk. Now, Jack, as you are my friend, own honeſtly---don't you think there is ſomething forward---ſomething indelicate in this haſte to forgive?---Women ſhould never ſue for reconciliation:---*that* ſhould *always* come from us.---*They* ſhould retain their coldneſs till *woo'd* to kindneſs---and their *pardon*, like their *love*, ſhould "not unſought be won."

Abſ. I have not patience to liſten to you:---thou'rt incorrigible!---ſo ſay no more on the ſubject.---I muſt go to ſettle a few matters---let me ſee you beforeſix ---remember---at my lodgings.——A poor induſtrious devil like me, who have toil'd and drudg'd, and plotted to gain my ends, and am at laſt diſappointed by other people's folly---may in pity be allowed to ſwear and grumble a little;---but a captious ſceptic in love, ---a ſlave to fretfulneſs and whim---who has no difficulties but of *his own* creating---is a ſubject more fit for ridicule than compaſſion! [*Exit* Abſolute.

Faulk. I feel his reproaches!---yet I would not change this too exquiſite nicety, for the groſs content with which *he* tramples on the thorns of love.---His engaging me in this duel, has ſtarted an idea in my head, which I will inſtantly purſue---I'll uſe it as the touch-ſtone of Julia's ſincerity and diſintereſtedneſs---if her love prove pure and ſterling ore---my name will reſt on it with honour!---and once I've ſtamp'd it there, I lay aſide my doubts for ever:---but if the droſs of ſelfiſhneſs, the allay of pride predominate---'twill be beſt to leave her as a toy for ſome leſs cautious Fool to ſigh for. [*Exit* Faulkland.

ACT V.

SCENE I. Julia's *Dreſſing-Room.*

Julia, *ſola.*

HOW this meſſage has alarmed me! what dreadful accident can he mean! why ſuch charge to

be alone?———O Faulkland! how many unhappy moments!---how many tears have you coſt me!

Enter Faulkland, *muffled up in a Riding-coat.*

Jul. What means this?——why this caution, Faulkland?

Faulk. Alas! Julia, I am come to take a long farewell.

Jul. Heav'ns! what do you mean?

Faul. You ſee before you a wretch, whoſe life is forfeited.---Nay, ſtart not!---the infirmity of my temper has drawn all this miſery on me.---I left you fretful and paſſionate---an untoward accident drew me into a quarrel---the event is, that I muſt fly this kingdom inſtantly.---O Julia, had I been ſo fortunate as to have call'd you mine intirely, before this miſchance had fallen on me, I ſhould not ſo deeply dread my baniſhment!——But no more of that---your heart and promiſe were given to one happy in his friends, character, and ſtation! they are not bound to wait upon a ſolitary, guilty exile.

Jul. My ſoul is oppreſs'd with ſorrow at the *nature* of your misfortune: had theſe adverſe circumſtances ariſen from a leſs fatal cauſe, I ſhould have felt ſtrong comfort in the thought that I could *now* chaſe from your boſom every doubt of the warm ſincerity of my love----My heart has long known no other guardian ---I now entruſt my perſon to your honour---we will fly together.---When ſafe from purſuit, my Father's will may be fulfilled---and I receive a legal claim to be the partner of your ſorrows, and tendereſt comforter. Then on the boſom of your wedded Julia, you may lull your keen regret to ſlumbering; while virtuous love, with a Cherub's hand, ſhall ſooth the brow of upbraiding thought, and pluck the thorn from compunction.

Faulk. O Julia! I am bankrupt in gratitude! but the time is ſo preſſing, it calls on you for ſo haſty a reſolution.---Would you not wiſh ſome hours to weigh the advantages you forego, and what a little compenſation poor Faulkland can make you beſides his ſolitary love?

Jul.

Jul. I aſk not a moment.---No, Faulkland, I have lov'd you for yourſelf: and if I now, more than ever prize the ſolemn engagement which ſo long has pledged us to each other, it is becauſe it leaves no room for hard aſperſions on my fame, and puts the ſeal of duty to an act of love.---But let us not linger.---Perhaps this delay———

Faulk. 'Twill be better I ſhould not venture out again till dark.—Yet am I griev'd to think what numberleſs diſtreſſes will preſs heavy on your gentle diſpoſition!

Jul. Perhaps your fortune may be forfeited by this unhappy act.—I know not whether 'tis ſo—but ſure that alone can never make us unhappy.—The little I have will be ſufficient to *ſupport* us; and *exile* never ſhould be ſplendid.

Faulk. Aye, but in ſuch an abject ſtate of life, my wounded pride perhaps may increaſe the natural fretfulneſs of my temper, till I become a rude, moroſe companion, beyond your patience to endure. Perhaps the recollection of a deed, my conſcience cannot juſtify, may haunt me in ſuch gloomy and unſocial fits, that I ſhall hate the tenderneſs that would relieve me, break from your arms, and quarrel with your fondneſs!

Jul. If your thoughts ſhould aſſume ſo unhappy a bent, you will the more want ſome mild and affectionate ſpirit to watch over and conſole you:---One who, by bearing *your* infirmities with gentleneſs and reſignation, may teach you *ſo* to bear the evils of your fortune.

Faulk. O Julia, I have proved you to the quick! and with this uſeleſs device I throw away all my doubts. How ſhall I plead to be forgiven this laſt unworthy effect of my reſtleſs, unſatisfied diſpoſition?

Jul. Has no ſuch diſaſter happened as you related?

Faulk. I am aſhamed to own that it was all pretended; yet in pity, Julia, do not kill me with reſenting a fault which never can be repeated: But ſealing this once, my pardon, let me to-morrow, in the face of Heaven, receive my future guide and monitreſs, and expiate my paſt folly, by years of tender adoration.

Jul. Hold, Faulkland!---that you are free from a crime, which I before fear'd to name, Heaven knows how ſincerely I rejoice---Theſe are tears of thankfulneſs for that! But that your cruel doubts ſhould have urged you to an impoſition that has wrung my heart, gives me now a pang, more keen than I can expreſs.

Faulk. By Heav'ns! Julia———

Jul. Yet hear me.——My Father lov'd you, Faulkland! and you preſerv'd the life that tender parent gave me; in his preſence I pledged my hand---*joyfully* pledged it---where before I had given my heart. When, ſoon after, I loſt that parent, it ſeem'd to me that Providence had, in Faulkland, ſhewn me whither to transfer, without a pauſe, my grateful duty, as well as my affection: Hence I have been content to bear from you what pride and delicacy would have forbid me from another.---I will not upbraid you, by repeating how you have trifled with my ſincerity.——

Faulk. I confeſs it all! yet hear———

Jul. After ſuch a year of trial—I might have flattered myſelf that I ſhould not have been inſulted with a new probation of my ſincerity, as cruel as unneceſſary! A trick of ſuch a nature, as to ſhow me plainly, that when I thought you lov'd me beſt, you even then regarded me as a mean diſſembler; an artful, prudent hypocrite.

Faulk. Never, never!

Jul. I now ſee it is not in your nature to be content, or confident to love. With this conviction—I never will be yours. While I had hopes that my perſevering attention, and unreproaching kindneſs might in time reform your temper, I ſhould have been happy to have gain'd a dearer influence over you; but I will not furniſh you with a licenſed power to keep alive an incorrigible fault, at the expence of one who never would contend with you.

Faulk. Nay, but Julia, by my ſoul and honour, if after this———

Jul. But one word more.---As my faith has once been given to you, I never will barter it with another.—I ſhall pray for your happineſs with the trueſt ſincerity;

rity; and the deareſt bleſſing I can aſk of Heaven to ſend to you, will be to charm you from that unhappy temper, which alone has prevented the performance of our ſolemn engagement.---All I requeſt of *you* is, that you will yourſelf reflect upon this infirmity, and when you number up the many true delights it has deprived you of---let it not be your *leaſt* regret, that it loſt you the love of one---who would have follow'd you in beggary through the world! [*Exit.*

Faulk. She's gone!---for ever!---There was an awful reſolution in her manner, that rivitted me to my place.———O Fool!—Dolt!—Barbarian!—Curſt as I am, with more imperfections than my fellow-wretches, kind Fortune ſent a heaven-gifted cherub to my aid, and, like a ruffian, I have driven her from my ſide!—I muſt now haſte to my appointment.——Well my mind is tuned for ſuch a ſcene.—I ſhall wiſh only to become a principal in it, and reverſe the tale my curſed folly put me upon forging here———O Love!—Tormentor!—Fiend!—whoſe influence, like the Moon's, acting on men of dull ſouls, makes idiots of them, but meeting ſubtler ſpirits, betrays their courſe, and urges ſenſibility to madneſs! [*Exit.*

Enter Maid *and* Lydia.

Maid. My Miſtreſs, Ma'am, I know, was here juſt now---perhaps ſhe is only in the next room.

[*Exit* Maid.

Lyd. Heigh ho!---Though he has uſed me ſo, this fellow runs ſtrangely in my head. I believe one lecture from my grave Couſin will make me recall him.

Enter Julia.

Lyd. O Julia, I am come to you with ſuch an appetite for conſolation.—Lud! Child, what's the matter with you?---You have been crying!---I'll be hanged, if that Faulkland has not been tormenting you!

Jul. You miſtake the cauſe of my uneaſineſs---Something *has* flurried me a little.---Nothing that you can gueſs at.———I would not accuſe Faulkland to a Siſter! [*Aſide.*

Lyd. Ah! whatever vexations you may have, I can

aſſure you mine ſurpaſs them———You know who Beverley proves to be?

Jul. I will now own to you, Lydia, that Mr. Faulkland had before inform'd me of the whole affair. Had young Abſolute been the perſon you took him for, I ſhould not have accepted your confidence on the ſubject, without a ſerious endeavour to counteract your caprice.

Lyd. So, then, I ſee I have been deceived by every one!—but I don't care---I'll never have him.

Jul. Nay, Lydia———

Lyd. Why, is it not provoking; when I thought we were coming to the prettieſt diſtreſs imaginable, to find myſelf made a mere Smithfield bargain of at laſt ———There had I projected one of the moſt ſentimental elopements!—ſo becoming a diſguiſe!---ſo amiable a ladder of Ropes!---Conſcious Moon---four horſes---Scotch parſon---with ſuch ſurpriſe to Mrs. Malaprop---and ſuch paragraphs in the News-papers! ———O, I ſhall die with diſappointment.

Jul. I don't wonder at it!

Lyd. Now---ſad reverſe!---what have I to expect, but, after a deal of flimſy preparation with a biſhop's licence, and my Aunt's bleſſing, to go ſimpering up to the Altar; or perhaps be cried three times in a country-church, and have an unmannerly fat clerk aſk the conſent of every butcher in the pariſh to join John Abſolute and Lydia Languiſh, *Spinſter!* O, that I ſhould live to hear myſelf called Spinſter!

Jul. Melancholy, indeed!

Lyd. How mortifying, to remember the dear delicious ſhifts I uſed to be put to, to gain half a minute's converſation with this fellow!———How often have I ſtole forth, in the coldeſt night in January, and found him in the garden, ſtuck like a dripping ſtatue!——There would he kneel to me in the ſnow, and ſneeze and cough ſo pathetically! he ſhivering with cold, and I with apprehenſion! and while the freezing blaſt numb'd our joints, how warmly would he preſs me to pity his flame, and glow with mutual ardour!——Ah, Julia! that was ſomething like being in love.

Jul.

Jul. If I were in ſpirits, Lydia, I ſhould chide you only by laughing heartily at you: but it ſuits more the ſituation of my mind, at preſent, earneſtly to entreat you, not to let a man, who loves you with ſincerity, ſuffer that unhappineſs from your *caprice*, which I know too well caprice can inflict.

Lyd. O Lud! what has brought my Aunt here!

Enter Mrs. Malaprop, Fag, *and* David.

Mrs. Mal. So! ſo! here's fine work!—here's fine ſuicide, paracide, and ſalivation going on in the fields! and Sir Anthony not to be found to prevent the antiſtrophe!

Jul. For Heaven's ſake, Madam, what's the meaning of this?

Mrs. Mal. That gentleman can tell you—'twas he enveloped the affair to me.

Lyd. Do, Sir, will you inform us. (*To* Fag.)

Fag. Ma'am, I ſhould hold myſelf very deficient in every requiſite that forms the man of breeding, if I delay'd a moment to give all the information in my power to a lady ſo deeply intereſted in the affair as you are.

Lyd. But quick! quick, Sir!

Fag. True, Ma'am, as you ſay, one ſhould be quick in divulging matters of this nature; for ſhould we be tedious, perhaps while we are flouriſhing on the ſubject, two or three lives may be loſt!

Lyd. O patience!—Do, Ma'am, for Heaven's ſake! tell us what is the matter?

Mrs. Mal. Why, murder's the matter! ſlaughter's the matter! killing's the matter!—but he can tell you the perpendiculars.

Lyd. Then, prythee, Sir, be brief.

Fag. Why then, Ma'am—as to murder—I cannot take upon me to ſay—and as to ſlaughter, or manſlaughter, that will be as the jury finds it.

Lyd. But who, Sir—who are engaged in this?

Fag. Faith, Ma'am, one is a young gentleman whom I ſhould be very ſorry any thing was to happen to—a very pretty behaved gentleman!—We have lived much together, and always on terms.

Lyd. But who is this? who! who! who!

Fag. My Maſter, Ma'am—my Maſter—I ſpeak of my Maſter.

Lyd. Heavens! What Captain Abſolute!

Mrs. Mal. O, to be ſure, you are frightened now!

Jul. But who are with him, Sir?

Fag. As to the reſt, Ma'am, his gentleman can inform you better than I.

Jul Do ſpeak, friend. (*To* David.)

David. Look'ee, my Lady—by the Maſs! there's miſchief going on.—Folks don't uſe to meet for amuſement with fire-arms, firelocks, fire-engines, fire-ſcreens, fire-office, and the devil knows what other crackers beſides!———This, my Lady, I ſay, has an angry favour.

Jul. But who is there beſide Captain Abſolute, friend?

David. My poor Maſter—under favour, for mentioning him firſt—You know me, my Lady—I am David—and my Maſter of courſe is, or *was* Squire Acres. ——Then comes Squire Faulkland.

Jul. Do Ma'am, let us inſtantly endeavour to prevent miſchief.

Mrs. Mal. O fie—it would be very inelegant in us;—we ſhould only participate things.

Dav. Ah! do Mrs. Aunt, ſave a few lives—they are deſperately given, believe me.—Above all, there is that blood-thirſty Philiſtine, Sir Lucius O'Trigger.

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger!—O mercy! have they drawn poor little dear Sir Lucius into the ſcrape?—why, how you ſtand, girl! you have no more feeling than one of the Derbyſhire Putrefactions!

Lyd. What are we to do, Madam?

Mrs. Mal. Why, fly with the utmoſt felicity to be ſure, to prevent miſchief:—here, friend—you can ſhew us the place?

Fag. If you pleaſe, Ma'am, I will conduct you.—David, do you look for Sir Anthony. [*Exit* David.

Mrs. Mal. Come, girls!—this gentleman will exhort us.—Come, Sir, you're our envoy—lead the way, and we'll precede.

Fag. Not a ſtep before the ladies for the world!

Mrs. Mal. You're ſure you know the ſpot.

Fag.

Fag. I think I can find it, Ma'am; and one good thing is, we ſhall hear the report of the piſtols as we draw near, ſo we can't well miſs them; never fear, Ma'am, never fear. [*Exeunt, he talking.*

SCENE II. *South Parade.*

Enter Abſolute, *putting his ſword under his great-coat.*

Abſ. A ſword ſeen in the ſtreets of Bath would raiſe as great an alarm as a mad-dog.—How provoking this is in Faulkland!—never punctual! I ſhall be obliged to go without him at laſt.—O, the devil! here's Sir Anthony!—how ſhall I eſcape him?

[*Muffles up his face, and takes a circle to go off.*

Enter Sir Anthony.

Sir Anth. How one may be deceived at a little diſtance! only that I ſee he don't know me, I could have ſworn that was Jack!—Hey!—Gad's life; it is.—Why, Jack, you Dog!—what are you afraid of?—hey! ſure I'm right.—Why, Jack—Jack Abſolute! [*Goes up to him.*

Abſ. Really, Sir, you have the advantage of me:—I don't remember ever to have had the honour—my name is Saunderſon, at your ſervice.

Sir Anth. Sir, I beg your pardon—I took you—hey!—why, z—ds! it is———Stay———

Looks up to his face.

So, ſo—your humble ſervant, Mr. Saunderſon!——— Why, you ſcoundrel, what tricks are you after now?

Abſ. O! a joke, Sir, a joke!—I came here on purpoſe to look for you, Sir.

Sir Anth. You did! well, I am glad you were ſo lucky: but what are you muffled up for?—what's this for?—hey?

Abſ. 'Tis cool, Sir; isn't it?—rather chilly ſomehow—but I ſhall be late—I have a particular engagement.

Sir Anth. Stay.—Why, I thought you were looking for me?—Pray, Jack, where is't you are going?

Abſ. Going, Sir!

Sir Anth. Aye—where are you going?

Abſ. Where am I going?

Sir. Anth. You unmannerly puppy!

Abſ. I was going, Sir, to—to—to—to Lydia——— Sir to Lydia—to make matters up if I could;—and I was looking for you, Sir, to—to———

Sir Anth. To go with you, I ſuppoſe—Well come along.

Abſ. O! z—ds! no, Sir, not for the world!------ I wiſh'd to meet with you, Sir, to—to—to——— You find it cool, I'm ſure, Sir—you'd better not ſtay out.

Sir Anth. Cool!—not at all—Well, Jack—and what will you ſay to Lydia?

Abſ. O, Sir, beg her pardon, humour her—promiſe and vow:—but I detain you, Sir—conſider the cold air on your gout.

Sir Anth. O, not at all!—not at all!—I'm in no hurry—Ah! Jack, you youngſters when once you are wounded here. [*Putting his hand to* Abſolute's *breaſt.*] Hey! what the deuce have you got here?

Abſ. Nothing, Sir,—nothing.

Sir Anth. What's this?—here's ſomething d——d hard!

Abſ. O, trinkets, Sir! trinkets---a bauble for Lydia!

Sir Anth. Nay, let me ſee your taſte.

[*Pulls his coat open, the ſword falls.*

Trinkets!—a bauble for Lydia!—z—ds! ſirrah, you are not going to cut her throat, are you?

Abſ. Ha! ha! ha!—I thought it would divert you, Sir, tho' I didn't mean to tell you till afterwards.

Sir Anth. You didn't?—Yes, this is a very diverting trinket, truly.

Abſ. Sir, I'll explain to you.—You know, Sir, Lydia is romantic—dev'liſh romantic, and very abſurd of courſe—now, Sir, I intend, if ſhe refuſes to forgive me—to unſheath this ſword—and ſwear—I'll fall upon its point, and expire at her feet!

Sir Anth. Fall upon fiddle-ſticks end!—why, I ſuppoſe it is the very thing that would pleaſe her---Get along, you Fool.———

Abſ. Well, Sir, you ſhall hear of my ſucceſs——— you ſhall hear—" O, Lydia!—forgive me, or this pointed ſteel"—ſays I.

Sir

Sir Anth. "O, Booby! ſtab away, and welcome" —ſays ſhe---Get along!---and d—n your trinkets!

[*Exit* Abſolute.

Enter David, *running.*

Dav. Stop him! ſtop him! Murder! Thief! Fire! ---Stop fire! Stop fire!---O Sir Anthony---call! call! bid 'em ſtop! Murder! Fire!

Sir Anth. Fire! Murder! where?

Dav. Oons! he's out of ſight! and I'm out of breath, for my part! O, Sir Anthony, why didn't you ſtop him? why didn't you ſtop him?

Sir Anth. Z---ds! the fellow's mad!---Stop whom? ſtop Jack?

Dav. Aye, the Captain, Sir!---there's murder and ſlaughter———

Sir Anth. Murder!

Dav. Aye, pleaſe you, Sir Anthony, there's all kinds of murder, all ſorts of ſlaughter to be ſeen in the fields: there's fighting going on, Sir---bloody ſword-and-gun fighting!

Sir Anth. Who are going to fight, Dunce?

Dav. Every body that I know of, Sir Anthony:--- every body is going to fight, my poor Maſter, Sir Lucius O'Trigger, your ſon, the Captain———

Sir Anth. O, the Dog!---I ſee his tricks:---do you know the place?

Dav. King's-Mead-Fields.

Sir Anth. You know the way?

Dav. Not an inch;---but I'll call the Mayor——— Aldermen---Conſtables---Church-wardens---and Beadles---we can't be too many to part them.

Sir Anth. Come along---give me your ſhoulder! we'll get aſſiſtance as we go---the lying villain——— Well, I ſhall be in ſuch a phrenzy---So---this was the hiſtory of his d----d trinkets! I'll bauble him!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. King's-Mead-Fields.

Sir Lucius *and* Acres, *with piſtols.*

Acres. By my valour! then, Sir Lucius, forty yards is a good diſtance---Odds levels and aims!---I ſay it is a good diſtance.

Sir Luc. Is it for muſkets or ſmall field-pieces? upon my

my conſcience, Mr. Acres, you muſt leave thoſe things to me.—Stay now—I'll ſhew you.

[*Meaſures paces along the ſtage.*

there now, that is a very pretty diſtance—a pretty gentleman's diſtance.

Acres. Z——ds! we might as well fight in a ſentry-box!—I tell you, Sir Lucius, the farther he is off, the cooler I ſhall take my aim.

Sir Luc. Faith! then I ſuppoſe you would aim at him beſt of all if he was out of ſight!

Acres. No, Sir Lucius—but I ſhould think forty or eight and thirty yards——

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! nonſenſe! three or four feet between the mouths of your piſtols is as good as a mile.

Acres. Odds bullets, no!—by my valour! there is no merit in killing him ſo near:—do, my dear Sir Lucius, let me bring him down at a long ſhot:——a long ſhot, Sir Lucius, if you love me!

Sir Luc. Well—the gentleman's friend and I muſt ſettle that.—But tell me now, Mr. Acres, in caſe of an accident, is there any little will or commiſſion I could execute for you?

Acres. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius—but I don't underſtand——

Sir Luc. Why, you may think there's no being ſhot at without a little riſk—and if an unlucky bullet ſhould carry a *Quietus* with it—I ſay it will be no time then to be bothering you about family matters.

Acres. A *Quietus!*

Sir Luc. For inſtance now—if that ſhould be the caſe—would you chuſe to be pickled and ſent home? or would it be the ſame to you to lie here in the Abbey?—I'm told there is very ſnug lying in the Abbey.

Acres. Pickled!—Snug lying in the Abbey!—Odds tremors! Sir Lucius, don't talk ſo!

Sir Luc. I ſuppoſe, Mr. Acres, you never were engaged in an affair of this kind before?

Acres. No, Sir Lucius, never before.

Sir Luc. Ah! that's a pity!—there's nothing like being

being uſed to a thing.—Pray now, how would you receive the gentleman's ſhot?

Acres. Odds files!—I've practiſed that—there, Sir Lucius—there [*Puts himſelf in an attitude.*

——a ſide-front, hey?—Odd! I'll make myſelf ſmall enough:—I'll ſtand edge-ways.

Sir Luc. Now—you're quite out—for if you ſtand ſo when I take my aim—— [*Levelling at him.*

Acres. Z——ds! Sir Lucius—are you ſure it is not cock'd?

Sir Luc. Never fear.

Acres. But—but—you don't know—it may go off of its own head!

Sir Luc. Pho! be eaſy—Well, now if I hit you in the body, my bullet has a double chance—for if it miſſes a vital part on your right ſide—'twill be very hard if it don't ſucceed on the left!

Acres. A vital part! O, my poor vitals!

Sir Luc. But, there—fix yourſelf ſo—— [*Placing him.*

let him ſee the broad ſide of your full front—there—now a ball or two may paſs clear thro' your body, and never do any harm at all.

Acres. Clean thro' me! a ball or two clean thro' me!

Sir Luc. Aye—may they—and it is much the genteeleſt attitude into the bargain.

Acres. Look'ee! Sir Lucius—I'd juſt as leive be ſhot in an aukward poſture as a genteel one---ſo, by my valour! I will ſtand edge-ways.

Sir Luc. (Looking at his watch.) Sure they don't mean to diſappoint us—Hah?—no faith—I think I ſee them coming.

Acres. Hey!---what!---coming!——

Sir Luc. Aye---Who are thoſe yonder getting over the ſtile?

Acres. There are two of them, indeed!---well----let them come---hey, Sir Lucius!---we---we---we---we---won't run.——

Sir Luc. Run!

Acres. No---I ſay---we *won't* run, by my valour!

Sir

Sir Luc. What the devil's the matter with you?

Acres. Nothing---nothing---my dear friend——— my dear Sir Lucius---but---I-I-I don't feel quite ſo bold, ſomehow---as I did.

Sir Luc. O fie!---conſider your honour.

Acres. Aye.---true---my honour——Do Sir Lucius, hedge in a word or two every now and then about my honour.

Sir Luc. Well, here they're coming. [*Looking.*

Acres. Sir Lucius---if I wa'n't with you, I ſhould almoſt think I was afraid---if my valour ſhould leave me!---Valour will come and go.

Sir Luc. Then, pray keep it faſt, while you have it.

Acres. Sir Lucius---I doubt it is going---yes---my valour is certainly going!---it is ſneaking off!---I feel it oozing out as it were at the palms of my hands!

Sir Luc. Your honour---your honour———Here they are.

Acres. O mercy!---now---that I were ſafe at *Clod-Hall!* or could be ſhot before I was aware!

Enter Faulkland *and* Abſolute.

Sir Luc. Gentlemen, your moſt obedient---hah!---what Captain Abſolute ---So, I ſuppoſe, Sir, you are come here, juſt like myſelf---to do a kind office, firſt for your friend—then to proceed to buſineſs on your own account.

Acres. What, Jack!---my dear Jack!---my dear friend!

Abſ. Hark'ee, Bob, Beverley's at hand.

Sir Luc. Well, Mr. Acres---I don't blame your ſaluting the gentleman civilly.---So, Mr. Beverley *(to* Faulkland) if you'll chuſe your weapons, the Captain and I will meaſure the ground.

Faulk. My weapons, Sir.

Acres. Odds life! Sir Lucius, I'm not going to fight Mr. Faulkland; theſe are my particular friends.

Sir Luc. What, Sir, did not you come here to fight Mr. Acres?

Faulk. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir Luc. Well, now, that's mighty provoking! But I hope, Mr. Faulkland, as there are three of us come on purpoſe for the game—you won't be ſo cantankerous as to ſpoil the party by ſiting out. *Abſ.*

Abſ. O pray, Faulkland, fight to oblige Sir Lucius.

Faulk. Nay, if Mr. Acres is ſo bent on the matter.

Acres. No, no, Mr Faulkland — I'll bear my diſappointment like a Chriſtian—Look'ee, Sir Lucius, there's no occaſion at all for me to fight; and if it is the ſame to you, I'd as lieve let it alone.

Sir Luc. Obſerve me, Mr. Acres — I muſt not be trifled with. You have certainly challenged ſomebody —and you came here to fight him—Now, if that gentleman is willing to repreſent him—I can't ſee, for my ſoul, why it isn't juſt the ſame thing.

Acres. Z——ds, Sir Lucius—I tell you, 'tis one Beverley I've challenged——a fellow, you ſee, that dare not ſhew his face! If *he* were here, I'd make him give up his pretenſions directly!———

Abſ. Hold, Bob—let me ſet you right—there is no ſuch man as Beverley in the caſe—The perſon who aſſumed that name is before you; and as his pretenſions are the ſame in both characters, he is ready to ſupport them in whatever way you pleaſe.

Sir Luc. Well, this is lucky—Now you have an opportunity—

Acres. What, quarrel with my dear friend Jack Abſolute—not if he were fifty Beverleys! Z——ds! Sir Lucius, you would not have me be ſo unnatural.

Sir Luc. Upon my conſcience, Mr. Acres, your valour has *oozed* away with a vengeance!

Acres. Not in the leaſt! Odds Backs and Abettors! I'll be your ſecond with all my heart——and if you ſhould get a *Quietus*, you may command me entirely. I'll get you a *ſnug lying* in the *Abbey here*; or *pickle* you, and ſend you over to Blunderbuſs-hall, or any of the kind with the greateſt pleaſure.

Sir Luc. Pho! pho! you are little better than a coward.

Acres. Mind, gentlemen, he calls me a *Coward*; Coward was the word by my valour!

Sir Luc. Well, Sir.

Acres. Look'ee, Sir Lucius, 'tisn't that I mind the word Coward—*Coward* may be ſaid in joke.—But if you had call'd me a *Poltroon*, Odds Daggers and Balls!

Sir

Sir Luc. Well, Sir?

Acres. —I ſhould have thought you a very ill-bred man.

Sir Luc. Pho! you are beneath my notice.

Abſ. Nay Sir Lucius, you can't have a better ſecond than my friend, Acres—He is a moſt *determined dog*—call'd in the country, *Fighting Bob.*—He generally *kills a man a week*; don't you, Bob?

Acres. Aye—at home!

Sir Luc. Well then, Captain, 'tis we muſt begin—ſo come out, my little counſellor, *(draws his ſword.)* and aſk the gentleman, whether he will reſign the lady, without forcing you to proceed againſt him?

Abſ. Come on then, Sir; *(draws)* ſince you won't let it be an amicable ſuit, here's *my reply.*

Enter Sir Anthony, David, *and the* Women.

David. Knock 'em all down, ſweet Sir Anthony, knock down my Maſter in particular—and bind his hands over to their good behaviour!

Sir Anth. Put up, Jack, put up, or I ſhall be in a frenzy—how came you in a duel, Sir?

Abſ. Faith, Sir, that gentleman can tell you better than I; 'twas he call'd on me, and you know, Sir, I ſerve his Majeſty.

Sir Anth. Here's a pretty fellow; I catch him going to cut a man's throat, and he tells me, he ſerves his Majeſty!—Zounds! ſirrah, then how durſt you draw the King's ſword againſt one of his ſubjects?

Abſ. Sir, I tell you! That gentleman call'd me out, without explaining his reaſons.

Sir Anth. Gad! Sir, how came you to call my ſon out, without explaining your reaſons?

Sir Luc. Your ſon, Sir, inſulted me in a manner which my honour could not brook.

Sir Anth. Zounds! Jack, how durſt you inſult the gentleman in a manner which his honour could not brook?

Mrs. Mal. Come, come, let's have no Honour before ladies—Captain Abſolute, come here—How could you intimidate us ſo?---Here's Lydia has been terrified to death for you.

Abſ.

Abſ. For fear I ſhould be kill'd, or eſcape, Ma'am?

Mrs. Mal. Nay, no deluſions to the paſt—Lydia is convinc'd; ſpeak, child.

Sir Luc. With your leave, Ma'am, I muſt put in a word here---I believe I could interpret the young lady's ſilence---Now mark---

Lyd. What is it you mean, Sir?

Sir Luc. Come, come, Delia, we muſt be ſerious now---this is no time for trifling.

Lyd. 'Tis true, Sir; and your reproof bids me offer this gentleman my hand, and ſolicit the return of his affections.

Abſ. O! my little angel, ſay you ſo?——Sir Lucius----I perceive there muſt be ſome miſtake here ———with regard to the affront which you affirm I have given you---I can only ſay, that it could not have been intentional.---And as you muſt be convinced that I ſhould not fear to ſupport a real injury—you ſhall now ſee that I am not aſhamed to atone for an inadvertency—I aſk your pardon.---But for this lady, while honour'd with her approbation, I will ſupport my claim againſt any man what ever.

Sir Antb. Well ſaid, Jack, and I'll ſtand by you, my Boy.

Acres. Mind, I give up all my claim---I make no pretenſions to any thing in the world---and if I can't get a wife, without fighting for her, by my valour! I'll live a bachelor.

Sir Luc. Captain, give me your hand---an affront handſomely acknowledged becomes an obligation---and as for the Lady---if ſhe chuſes to deny her own hand writing here!——— *(Taking out letters.)*

Mrs. Mal. O, he will deſolve my myſtery!---Sir Lucius, perhaps there's ſome miſtake---perhaps I can illuminate———

Sir Luc. Pray, old gentlewoman, don't interfere, where you have no buſineſs.---Miſs Languiſh, are you my Delia, or not?

Lyd. Indeed, Sir Lucius, I am not.

(Lydia *and* Abſolute *walk aſide.)*

Mrs. Mal. Sir Lucius O'Trigger—ungrateful as you are

are---I own the ſoft impeachment---pardon my bluſhes. I am Delia.

Sir Luc. You Delia---pho, pho! be eaſy.

Mrs. Mal. Why, thou barbarous Vandyke——— thoſe letters are mine---When you are more ſenſible of my benignity---perhaps I may be brought to encourage your addreſſes.

Sir Luc. Mrs. Malaprop, I am extremely ſenſible of your condeſcenſion; and whether you or Lucy have put this trick upon me, I am equally beholden to you.———And to ſhew you I'm not ungrateful, Captain Abſolute! ſince you have taken that lady from me, I'll give you my Delia into the bargain.

Abſ. I am much obliged to you, Sir Lucius; but here's our friend, fighting Bob, unprovided for.

Sir Luc. Hah! little Valour---here, will you make your fortune?

Acres. Odds Wrinkles! No---But give us your hand, Sir Lucius, forget and forgive; but if ever I give you a chance of *pickling* me again, ſay Bob Acres is a Dunce, that's all.

Sir Anth. Come, Mrs. Malaprop, don't be caſt down---you are in your bloom yet.

Mrs. Mal. O Sir Anthony!---men are all barbarians--- *(All retire but* Julia *and* Faulkland.)

Jul. He ſeems dejected and unhappy---not ſullen---there was ſome foundation, however, for the tale he told me---O woman! how true ſhould be your judgment, when your reſolution is ſo weak!

Faulk. Julia! how can I ſue for what I ſo little deſerve? I dare not preſume---yet Hope is the child of Penitence.

Jul. Oh! Faulkland, you have not been more faulty in your unkind treatment of me, than I am now in wanting inclination to reſent it. As my heart honeſtly bids me place my weakneſs to the account of love, I ſhould be ungenerous not to admit the ſame plea for your's.

Faulk. Now I ſhall be bleſt indeed!

(Sir Anthony *comes forward.)*

Sir Anth.

Sir Anth. What's going on here?---So you have been quarrelling too, I warrant.———Come, Julia, I never interfered before; but let me have a hand in the matter at laſt.---All the faults I have ever ſeen in my friend Faulkland, ſeemed to proceed from what he calls the *delicacy* and *warmth* of his affection for you———There, marry him directly, Julia, you'll find he'll mend ſurpriſingly!

(The reſt come forward.)

Sir Luc. Come now, I hope there is no diſſatiſfied perſon, but what is content; for as I have been diſappointed myſelf, it will be very hard if I have not the ſatisfaction of ſeeing other people ſucceed better———

Acres. You are right Sir Lucius.---So, Jack, I wiſh you joy---Mr. Faulkland the ſame.---Ladies, ---come now, to ſhew you I'm neither vex'd nor angry, Odds Tabors and Pipes! I'll order the fiddles in half an hour, to the New Rooms---and I inſiſt on your all meeting me there.

Sir Anth. Gad! Sir, I like your ſpirit; and at night we ſingle lads will drink a health to the young couples, and a huſband to Mrs. Malaprop.

Faulk. Our partners are ſtolen from us, Jack---I hope to be congratulated by each other----yours for having checked in time, the errors of an ill-directed Imagination, which might have betray'd an innocent heart; and mine, for having, by her gentleneſs and candour, reformed the unhappy temper of one, who by it made wretched whom he loved moſt, and tortured the heart he ought to have ador'd.

Abſ. Well, Jack, we have both taſted the Bitters, as well as the Sweets, of Love---with this difference only, that *you* always prepared the bitter cup for yourſelf, while *I*———

Lyd. Was always obliged to *me* for it, hey! Mr. Modeſty?———But come, no more of that---our happineſs is now as unallay'd as general.

Jul. Then let us ſtudy to preſerve it ſo: and while Hope pictures to us a flattering ſcene of future Bliſs, let

let us deny its pencil thoſe colours which are too bright to be laſting---When Hearts deſerving Happineſs would unite their fortune, Virtue would crown them with an unfading garland of modeſt, hurtleſs flowers; but ill-judging Paſſion will force the gaudier Roſe into the wreath, whoſe thorn offends them, when its Leaves are dropt!

FINIS.